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ABSTRACT

The Title I Support System had two major functions: to provide technical assistance to Title I and migrant education projects specially selected for targeted dissemination to Title I schools through the Title I/National Diffusion Network (NDN); and to document, analyze, and report on the technical assistance activities and transactions between the Support System and its client projects. This report fulfills the second function: it provides information and recommendations to United States Office of Education program personnel responsible for designing or monitoring national dissemination strategies and technical assistance efforts to support them. Two areas are examined: the needs of developer-demonstrator projects; and the role of technical assistance in meeting those needs and supporting project operations. Described in detail are the technical assistance needs of each of the 21 projects, the different modes of assistance the Support System provided to meet those needs, factors that appear to be of significance in delivering technical assistance needs of each of the 21 projects, the different modes of assistance the Support System provided to meet those needs, factors that appear to be of significance in delivering technical assistance service, and the project personnel's perception of the utility and effect of the assistance they received. Questions raised by this study are also presented for future consideration. (Author/ST)

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PREPARING FOR DISSEMINATION

A Study of Technical Assistance for Developer-Demonstrator projects in the NDN

February 1979

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The NETWORK was contracted by the U. S. Office of Education in November, 1977 to implement a nine-month project (later extended to twelve months) known as the Title I Support System. The project had two major components:

A service delivery component...to provide technical assistance to Title I and Migrant Education projects specially selected for targetted dissemination to Title I schools across the country.

A study component...to document, analyze and report on the technical assistance activities and transactions between the Support System and its clients.

The purpose of this report (the product of the Support System study component) is to provide information and recommendations to USOE program personnel responsible for designing and monitoring national dissemination strategies and technical assistance efforts to support them.

USOE had two reasons for requesting that the Support System undertake a study of its own operation. The first reason was that the Support System's operating context and client group represented a microcosm of the larger National Diffusion Network for which USOE was in the process of implementing a major technical assistance program. The Support System's immediate start-up and limited period of operation (described below in Chapter 2) held promise of being able to demonstrate technical assistance strategies and produce empirical evidence of dissemination-related needs for technical assis-

tance in timely enough fashion to inform the operation of the larger NDN technical assistance effort.

A second reason was that the knowledge base on technical assistance systems for education has only recently begun to be built; nowhere is there research or proven practice to clearly guide the development of technical assistance services geared to the needs of dissemination practitioners -- itself an emerging role in the field of educational change and program improvement. USOE recognized that the Title I Support System, seated squarely in the middle of a significant national dissemination strategy, presented an important opportunity to contribute to the knowledge base on technical assistance as it relates to dissemination.

The Support System was, therefore, asked to examine two areas of concern to USOE program managers: the needs of D/Ds, developer-demonstrator projects (exemplary projects funded for dissemination through the National Diffusion Network) that affect their capacity to operate; and the role of technical assistance in ameliorating those needs and supporting D/D operation.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The report consists of six major chapters and a set of appendices, arranged as follows.

Chapter 1 provides an Introduction to the report. It describes the purpose of the study and outlines the organization of the document. Comments concerning the preparation of the report conclude the chapter.

Chapter 2 describes the context within which the Support System operated and the study was conducted. The goals and purposes of the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy are discussed and the series of

events leading to the funding of the Title I Support System are presented. The chapter concludes with a description of the technical assistance approach employed in the Title I Support System.

Chapter 3 describes the study's framework and methodology. The five study questions are presented with a description of the data sources for answering each question. Procedures used to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data are discussed.

Chapter 4 is divided in five sections, each of which presents the findings for one of the five study questions. Part I examines the technical assistance needs of the 21 projects. An analysis of the demands placed upon the projects by their participation in the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy is presented followed by a description of eight specific need areas identified through examination of needs assessment surveys and a content analysis of documents describing each technical assistance transaction.

Chapter 4, Part II describes the different modes of technical assistance service which the Support System provided to meet project needs. This section also presents the results of an analysis of the need areas addressed in the technical assistance exchanges.

Chapter 4, Part III examines a number of quantitative and qualitative factors related to variations in the technical assistance services provided to different projects. Seven characteristics along which projects were grouped for comparison and contrast with regard to variations in the amount, type and content of technical assistance provided are described and the findings from each grouping presented. The second section of Part III presents a number of qualitative characteristics of the projects which the Support System staff observed to be of significance in providing technical assistance.

Part IV of Chapter 4 again presents qualitative material describing factors (other than the characteristics of the client projects) that appear to be of significance in delivering technical assistance services.

Findings from the last study question concerning the projects' perceptions of the utility and effects of the technical assistance they received are presented in Chapter 4, Part V. The section includes comments and observations made by the client projects as well as an analysis of their responses to multiple choice items posed in a telephone interview by a member of The NETWORK's research staff.

Chapter 5, Conclusions and Implications, provides information and recommendations for USOE with regard to the areas of concern noted above: the needs of developer-demonstrator projects and the role of technical assistance in meeting those needs.

The final chapter (Chapter 6) presents some questions for future consideration raised by the study.

The report includes several tables and a number of Appendices. The reader is referred to the Table of Contents for a listing of these items.

COMMENTS ON THE PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

The present study was contracted to take advantage of some promising but unanticipated opportunities that arose with the development of the Title I dissemination strategy in the Summer of 1977.

Thus, the study was designed and implemented by the same organization whose activities are its focus. The report presents a description of the Support System's experience and an analysis of what that experience suggests to the people who implemented the project and to the people who observed it.

The development of the study framework, the collection of data from field observation and interviews with the client projects, and the data analysis were all done by NETWORK research staff and consultants who neither took part in the provision of technical assistance nor have any expertise or experience in providing such services. The subjective material which the report presents is based in part on the impressions, observations and analysis of the Support System Project Director (who was the single full-time staff person on the project) and in part, on the observations and interpretation of NETWORK research staff and an outside consultant who reviewed the materials the Project Director prepared.

That the study was prepared in this manner has influenced its tone and style. In many places it does not read as if it were written by a naive observer; that's because it wasn't. We recognize that the manner in which the report was prepared may be viewed by some as a serious limitation on the usefulness of the material it presents. The purpose of these comments is to let those readers know that we have been aware of those limitations from the outset and that given a decision between taking advantage of the opportunity for study with all its limitations, and simply conducting the technical assistance project without the study component, USOE personnel and NETWORK staff both felt that it was important to use the situation at hand to see what experience could teach us.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

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THE BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

THE TITLE I/NDN DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

During the Spring and early Summer of 1977 three agencies within the United States Office of Education were working on two different, but complementary dissemination efforts involving exemplary Title I projects. By August, these agencies had joined forces to launch what is now known as the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy.

PIP Disseminators funded by OPBE

Prior to the evolution of the jointly sponsored effort, one of the three OE agencies the Office of Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation, OPBE, (now known as the Office of Evaluation and Dissemination) had been developing plans to fund eight local school districts with successful Title I projects to function as PIP Disseminators. The districts were to be known as PIP Disseminators because their Title I projects had served as models for the development of comprehensive packaged materials called PIPs or Project Information Packages. The PIPs, developed in the early 70's under OPBE contracts with RMC Research Corporation and CEMREL, Inc. each contained detailed descriptions of the management, staffing, instruction and evaluation of one of the projects.

A total of twelve PIPs had been developed in two cycles or waves. After field-testing and revision the first set of six were disseminated through a variety of USOE-funded efforts. (See Campeau, Binkley, et. al. 1978) Evaluation of these dissemination attempts showed that in order for the PIPs to be effectively implemented, adopters needed to have access to people -- preferably those involved in the original project -- to assist their efforts. Thus, in Spring, 1977, OPBE awarded sole source contracts to five of the second wave PIP sites and three of the first wave PIP sites to disseminate the projects and assist adopters to implement them.

These eight projects were, for the most part, brand new to dissemination and, since the sole source contracts had come looking for them instead of the other way around (as in the case of projects who seek D/D funding) USOE felt that special provisions would need to be made to prepare the project sites for active, effective national dissemination. USOE also felt that the projects would need orientation to and assistance with developing ways of using the PIP materials in their dissemination efforts. Because the PIPs had not been developed by the projects themselves, but by outside contractors, the project personnel were not as familiar with the materials as they might have been.

To provide the eight PIP Disseminators with the assistance they might need, USOE made plans to fund four agencies[1] as technical assistors. Each of the four contractors (selected because each was experienced in the NDN and had served as a PIP diffusion contractor during 1976-77) assumed responsibility for providing technical assistance to two of the eight PIP Disseminators from September, 1977 - February, 1978. In addition, the four contractors were to jointly run an Orientation Workshop for the eight projects after they received their contracts in September.

Title I/NDN Collaboration

While OPBE was mounting the PIP Disseminator effort, two other USOE agencies were working together on another dissemination effort involving Title I projects. The Division of Education Replication (program office

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[1]The four agencies contracted to provide assistance to the PIP sites and, later, to serve as coordinators of the five regional conferences were:

The Washington State Facilitator
Yakima, Washington
Keith Wright

The Illinois State Facilitator Project
Metropolis, Illinois
Shirley Menendez

Ihe SE Minnesota Facilitator Project
The EXCHANGE, Un. of Minnesota
Thel Kocher, Diane Lassman

The NETWORK
Andover, Massachusetts
Dennis Collins, David Crandall

A fifth contract was awarded to the ECOS Training Center, Yorktown Heights, New York to provide assistance in coordinating the conferences.

for the National Diffusion Network) and the Division of Education for the Disadvantaged (then comprising both Title I and Migrant Education) were exploring ways to increase the number of adoptions of Title I D/D projects by local Title I schools and districts.

By the end of the Summer the three agencies -- OPBE, DER, and DED -- had joined forces to implement a strategy directed toward securing 300 adoptions by Title I districts in 45 states of 21 specially selected Title I and Migrant Education projects including the 8 PIP Disseminators funded by OPBE. To accomplish this goal -- jointly set by the NDN and Title I -- a series of five regional awareness conferences highlighting the 21 projects was planned to occur during the Fall and early Winter. Each conference was to draw up to 400 participants from local Title I districts in two USOE regions for two days of presentations by and interaction with the 21 Title I projects.

Beyond the goal of achieving 300 Title I adoptions in 45 states, the collaborating USOE agencies shared other goals for the dissemination strategy. All hoped that the effort would result in improved educational services for the nation's disadvantaged children as well as increased collaboration at the state level (SEA Title I Coordinator, SEA Migrant Coordinator, NDN State Facilitator) directed at Title I program improvement. To give the state level collaboration a start, USOE urged state Title I and Migrant Education Coordinators to work with NDN State Facilitators in selecting participants for the regional conferneces.

In addition to these mutually held goals, each of the sponsoring agencies had its own interest in the success of the Title I dissemination strategy. As noted above, a primary interest of OPBE was to test whether the PIP Disseminators operating as D/Ds in the NDN would result in more widespread adopter use of the specially developed Project Information Packages.

Title I's specific interest lay in a desire to strengthen an emerging shift away from monitoring compliance and toward substantive program improvement via dissemination as an emphasis at the Federal level. A major NDN goal

for the collaborative strategy was to demonstrate that the National Diffusion Network is an effective delivery system for targeting special populations of adopters with projects developed in various USOE program offices.

The 21 Title I projects

The key actors in the Title I dissemination strategy were the 21 exemplary projects. The projects had in common the fact that they had each been developed with Title I funds, site visited by Federal Title I officials and found to be in compliance with Federal Title I guidelines, and reviewed and approved by the Joint Dissemination Review Panel. Each project was designed to serve educationally disadvantaged students. Beyond these characteristics, however, the projects' homogeneity was limited. The funds that supported the projects' participation in the Title I dissemination effort came from various agencies: nine of the 21 had been funded as NDN D/Ds during the funding competition in May, 1977; four of the 21 -- all Migrant Education programs -- received no specific funds for NDN dissemination but used portions of their regular Title I funding to support their dissemination activities, thus, they were <u>not technically</u> NDN D/D projects though they were, for purposes of the Title I dissemination effort, active participants in the NDN; as described above the remaining 8 projects were funded under sole source contracts from the Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation as PIP Disseminators. Like the four non-funded migrant projects, these eight were <u>not technically</u> NDN D/Ds although they did have specific funding for dissemination from an OE agency, and they were participating in the NDN through the Title I dissemination strategy.

The 21 projects also had varying degrees of experience in the National Diffusion Network. Three had been disseminating their programs in the NDN since its beginning in 1974, but the remaining eighteen began their first <u>active</u> NDN involvement in September, 1977, as part of the Title I dissemination effort.

Once the sponsoring USOE agencies had begun working together contracts to the four technical assistance contractors were modified to include responsibility for designing and coordinating the five regional awareness conferences. Plans for the Orientation Workshop the technical assistance contractors had been preparing for the eight PIP Disseminators were expanded to include participation by all 21 projects and the workshop focus shifted from familiarizing the PIP projects with their PIP materials to orienting all of the projects to the emerging Title I dissemination strategy and their role in it. Although the contractors maintained responsibility for providing ongoing technical assistance to the eight PIP Disseminator projects from September-February, when the Title I dissemination strategy was launched in September, the Orientation Workshop was the only assistance planned for the remaining 13 projects.

Summary: Key features of the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy

To summarize then, the Title I/NDN dissemination effort had a number of significant features:

1. It had been collaboratively developed by several agencies within the U.S. Office of Education: the Division of Education for the Disadvantaged (Title I), the Division of Educational Replication (the NDN), and the Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation.
2. It addressed multiple goals -- some of which were mutually held by the sponsoring agencies and some of which were idiosyncratic to specific agencies. The most significant goals, as described by USOE personnel were:
   - to achieve 300 adoptions of exemplary Title I projects in 45 states during the 77-78 school year and in so doing to improve the services available to the nation's disadvantaged children
   - to foster increased collaboration between the state Title I and Migrant Education Coordinators and the NDN State Facilitators in meeting the needs of disadvantaged students
   - to demonstrate that subsystems within the National Diffusion Network can target on specialized projects for adoption

- to expand Title I emphasis beyond monitoring compliance to substantive program improvement via dissemination
- to support more widespread adoption of the OPBE-developed Project Information Packages

3. It had four sets of key actors:
   a. 21 exemplary Title I projects -- many new to the NDN
   b. Four agencies contracted to provide technical assistance to eight of the projects, provide an Orientation Workshop for all 21 projects, and coordinate the five regional conferences
   c. USOE personnel from the sponsoring agencies
   d. "Secondary disseminators" including NDN State Facilitators and State Title I Coordinators
4. It rested upon a particular strategy -- the use of 5 regional conferences to bring members of a specific target audience, local Title I schools/districts, in direct contact with a sub-network of NDN D/D projects -- those developed by and validated as effective in Title I settings

The impetus for the development of the Title I Support System

In late September, 1977, the four conference contractors developed and ran an Orientation Workshop for the 21 projects. As noted earlier, 8 of the projects were eligible for and had been receiving other kinds of technical assistance services from the contractors; the purpose of this three-day workshop, held in New Orleans, was to insure that all projects received the same message regarding the nature and purpose of the experimental Title I/NDN dissemination effort, needed logistical details about the five conferences, and an initial orientation to topics of importance to new D/Ds:

- development of a dissemination management plan
- preparation of materials and presentations
- operating a demonstration site and delivering training
- assisting adopters with implementation

Workshop observers from RMC Corporation described the event as a success noting... *"The results of the New Orleans meeting auger well for the special*

dissemination effort." Their report also describes a specific session during which the 13 projects who were without provision for assistance beyond the workshop made a request that USOE recognize their needs and attempt to provide technical assistance services.

USOE's response was swift and positive. The next morning the four technical assistance contractors met over breakfast with personnel from DER and OPBE to discuss the concern among the 13 projects about technical assistance. It was apparent that technical assistance needed to be provided quickly and that three of the four technical assistance contractors could not provide adequate staff time to meet the needs of additional projects. The contractors agreed that since one of them -- The NETWORK -- had available staff to serve the additional projects, the best solution would be to let an additional contract to The NETWORK to provide technical assistance to the 13 unserved projects. Technical assistance to the eight OPBE-funded PIP Disseminators could be provided by the four contractors as originally planned until their contracts expired in February. It was also agreed that The NETWORK would utilize the other three contractors as resources for serving the 13 projects wherever feasible and appropriate.

Following the Orientation Workshop The NETWORK assumed interim responsibility for assessing and meeting the needs of the 13 unserved projects, USOE personnel began examining options available to contract for more long-term support for the 21 Title I D/Ds. Based upon the need for an immediately available contractor with experience in the NDN and expertise in providing technical assistance, USOE requested that The NETWORK respond to a sole source solicitation to provide immediate, targetted technical assistance to the 21 projects in the Title I sub-network. Describing the need for such an effort the Work Statement issued The NETWORK by OPBE noted.

> *"At the (orientation) conference, the projects' need for technical assistance and support in the form of consulting help, relevant information, and assistance in maintaining contact with one another was obvious. At that time, OE recognized that for these projects to effectively participate in and realize the goals of this dissemination effort it is imperative to provide the project disseminators with as much targetted,*

specialized assistance as possible prior to the regional conferences and immediately afterward. This contract is to be the vehicle for providing this type of focused assistance to the 21 client projects."

The Work Statement outlined five task areas. Three tasks required the provision of different technical assistance services:

- on-site assistance and consultation to client projects
- ongoing information and resource linkage assistance
- various strategies for establishing communication, sharing, and support among the client projects

A fourth task spoke to the need for the Title I Support System to maintain liaison with *"appropriate OE staff...and technical assistance efforts."* The final task described USOE's interest in having The NETWORK document, analyze, and report on its technical assistance efforts in order to produce a report *"providing USOE with information about the dissemination-related needs of demonstration projects and the kinds of assistance responsive to those needs."* This report resulted from this task.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE TITLE I SUPPORT SYSTEM

This section describes the technical assistance project that The NETWORK proposed and implemented in response to OPBE's solicitation. First the structural components of the project will be described. Next, four assumptions about the nature of technical assistance which guided the operation of the Support System will be presented. Finally, three key features of the technical assistance approach demonstrated by the Support System and derived from the assumptions will be discussed.

This Chapter concludes with a review of recent literature on technical assistance systems from which The NETWORK derived the assumptions that underlie the Title I Support System approach.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE TITLE I SUPPORT SYSTEM

Staff

The Support System was staffed by a single full time Project Director who functioned as the technical assistant for all 21 clients and as the manager of all the activities carried out by the technical assistance project.

All services, whether provided to individual clients or to groups of clients were negotiated and coordinated by the Support System Project Director. Technical assistance services were available in several different forms (described below) -- some of which were provided by the Project Director to the clients and some of which were provided by consultants (both from within and outside The NETWORK) under the Project Director's management.

Negotiation and management of service delivery

In cases where consultants were sent to work with individual projects a ten-step procedure was used to insure that the consultant was well prepared before arriving at the client site, and to insure that the consultant provided a full report of services delivered to the Support System Project Director. The ten-step procedure included:

1. Need identified by project request or Support System assessment.
2. Need discussed, clarified; visit dates selected.
3. Consultant identified.
4. Consultant briefed.
5. Client provided with information about consultant and visit logistics confirmed.
6. Consultant calls client for planning and discussion.
7. Consultant visits.
8. Consultant reports to Support System in writing and debriefs by phone or in person.
9. Client provides written feedback.
10. Support System follows up by phone with client.

Other services such as telephone consultation or in-person consultation at a location other than the client site were arranged (and for the most part provided) by the Support System Project Director in response to specific client requests or as a result of discussion between the Support System staff and the client.

Assessment procedures

A number of assessment strategies were used to identify areas within which the client projects needed or desired assistance

- checklists and questionnaires were completed by each project that attended the Orientation Workshop in September, 1977
- the Support System Project Director used regular, informal telephone conversations with the projects as a way of detecting needs for assistance or problems being encountered
- specific consultative sessions were held with projects to discuss needs and problems and plan for technical assistance service
- questionnaires were used to elicit information about project needs in planning for technical assistance workshops

Technical assistance services

As requested in OPBE's solicitation the Title I Support System offered clients a range of technical assistance services. Each service will be described with illustrative examples below.

Consultation

The forms of consultation offered by the Title I Support System varied in terms of who provided the service, where it was provided, how long it took, and whether it was done in person or over the phone. Depending upon the need the client presented, and the mode that client and technical assistant deemed most appropriate, the consultation might have involved one of the following:

1. A 2-3 day on-site visit by a consultant with expertise specifically related to the client's need. These visits were typically made by persons other than Title I Support System staff.

2. A 1-2 hour one:one consultation which took place within the context of some other event involving both the client and the technical assistant or consultant providing the help. (i.e., the Title I Support System staff often provided such consultation at the regional awareness conferences or NDN conferences which all parties -- clients and technical assistants had to attend.)

3. A single phone conversation or a series of phone conversations over several days between the client and the technical assistant. The Support System like other NETWORK technical assistance projects, offered its clients the access to service through a toll-free WATS number. Very often, then, clients would simply pick up the phone and call for help when problems arose. Depending on the nature of the problem, a consultative conversation would ensue on the spot, or an initial discussion would be had to begin work on the problem and define further plans (more phone conversations, a visit, etc.) to complete the assistance transaction.

   A series of telephone consultations with one client resulted in the planning and development of a training workshop -- the first the client had ever been called upon to do. This extended consultation was followed up with a telephone de-briefing after the training was done.

   In many cases, clients stated a clear preference for working over the phone rather than having a person come on site to help. Often, too, problems and questions are of such an urgent nature that only by talking things through on the spot, can appropriate help be rendered.

4. In some instances technical services were obtained (i.e., graphic artists) by the Support System for the client and the resulting product or information sent to the project.

Information and resources

The identification, transformation and dissemination of print resources relevant to program dissemination was a major aspect of Support System technical assistance.

Workshop sessions focused on the use of handouts or planning sheets; telephone consultations were often followed up with a package of information relevant to the topic that had been discussed; needs that were determined to be common and widespread among the projects, once detected, were addressed with resources and information mailed to each and every project. The sources of the materials included: on-line computer searches, excerpts from books and articles as well as complete articles where relevant; samples of forms, worksheets and planning guides -- some developed by the Support System staff, some developed by the client projects, and others retrieved from The NETWORK's project related resource center. A sample of the kinds of information and resources the Support System provided its clients follows.

WORKSHOPS AND PLANNING GUIDES

- A 10-page *"Follow-Up Assistance Planning Packet"* was prepared by the Support System staff for use by client projects at a workshop focusing on providing implementation assistance to adopters. It was also mailed to each project unable to attend the workshop.
- *"What Are the Chances?"* -- A handout developed by Peter Treadway of RMC Corportation to help D/Ds define their essential elements was duplicated and sent to each project.

SAMPLE FORMS AND PROCEDURES

- Two compilations of D/D-developed forms were produced. One drew from many different D/Ds in the NDN (an update of a volume produced in 1975 by Far West Lab); the second compiled all of the forms that had been developed by the 21 Title I D/Ds for sharing among them.

- The Support System staff created a set of sample forms for projects to use in documenting their dissemination efforts for formative evaluation. These forms were sent to each project.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

- Many of the projects were unaware of the development of new Title I evaluation models or the existence of Title I technical assistance centers across the country. Copies of (free) User's Guides to the Title I Evaluation System were ordered by the Support System staff and then sent to each of the 21 projects.

- Information concerning technical subjects such as obtaining clearances for the use of student photographs, or copyright information was retrieved and distributed in response to some specific requests.

COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCE PACKAGES

- A resource package on the topic of designing training workshops was prepared and distributed to all projects. The package included: complete documents on microfiche; ERIC abstracts; excerpts from full-length books and articles; complete articles; a list of references and bibliographies.

COMPUTER SEARCHES

- One such search retrieved information on Competency Based Teacher Education in reading for a project engaged in developing teacher training modules for use with adopters.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The Title I Support System responded to general questions posed by the clients over the course of the contract. The project staff served as an information clearinghouse concerning items such as dates and locations of upcoming NDN meetings, clarification of procedural issues, contact information for various USOE personnel, and news or activities concerning other D/Ds.

Workshops

The Support System proposal called for the preparation of brief workshop sessions to be offered to the projects at each of the five regional conferences. Early in the Support System's operation, however, it became clear to the Project Director and to the OPBE Project Officer that the projects had several needs in common that could be addressed more effectively in concentrated multi-day workshops than in scattered one or two hour sessions. Thus the provision of technical assistance workshops was added to the Support System's work scope.

Two major workshops were conducted during the contract period. The first in February, 1978 was specifically for the 11 PIP projects. This workshop focused on helping the projects develop strategies for using the PIP materials in their dissemination activities.

A second workshop in October, 1978 was attended by 13 projects. It addressed two topics of concern--the provision of follow-up assistance to adopters and the evaluation of NDN adoptions. This workshop also included one session specifically for the PIP projects concerning procedures for revising the PIP materials. Two other features of this workshop were a consultant bazaar in which projects received individual consultation on specific problems, and a Show and Tell session in which projects exchanged experiences and ideas with one another.

In addition, the Title I Support System conducted a series of one-two hour sessions at the five regional awareness conferences, and one at each of the two NDN-wide conferences. The first such session provided opportunities for dissemination coordinators to give and receive feedback on their presentations. Most of the remaining sessions focused on emerging project concerns which the Title I Support System addressed with substantive presentations, mini-workshop sessions, and resource materials.

For example, at the Dallas regional awareness conference in November,

1977, the Support System organized discussion groups, chaired by two experienced dissemination coordinators, to give newer D/Ds the opportunity to share questions and concerns about "Working with Adopters" and "Working with State Facilitators." To follow up, the Support System Project Director made a presentation two weeks later, at the Atlanta regional awareness conference, on these same topics.

On another occasion a NETWORK training specialist conducted a session on "Planning and Running Training Sessions"; and in yet another of the regional conferences the Project Director worked with the projects on procedures for documenting dissemination activities. In each session supporting materials were distributed.

Networking strategies

In addition to locating and providing technical resources for the clients, the Support System also implemented specific strategies for helping the clients use each other as resources.

A special newsletter was produced by the Support System Project Director with information from and about the client projects. A special mailback sheet called the newsgram was provided with a post-paid envelope in each MEMO so that projects could send news, questions, and ideas they wanted to share. In all a total of nine MEMOs were produced during the year the Support System was in operation.

The Support System also prepared a monthly column for the NDN newsletter to provide the projects with another source of information about each other's activities and to inform the NDN at large about the progress of the Title I dissemination effort.

Included in the nine articles prepared over the course of the Support System contracts were the following:

May, 1978	Technical Assistance: Who Needs It, How Do They Get It, and What Does It All Mean?
June, 1978	Assessing and Meeting Adopter Support Needs, Part I: Sensing Support Needs
July, 1978	Assessing and Meeting Adopter Support Needs, Part II: Meeting Adopter's Support Needs
September, 1978	Monitoring Implementation: What Does the Research Suggest?
October, 1978	A Year in the Life of a New D/D: What Have We Learned?
November, 1978	Title I Technical Assistance to Continue

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UNDERLYING THE SUPPORT SYSTEM APPROACH

The approach used to operationalize the project structure proposed for the Title I Support System was based upon a set of assumptions about the nature of technical assistance. These assumptions derived in part from The NETWORK's experience providing technical assistance and in part from a review of the literature describing current technical assistance systems for education.

ASSUMPTION 1: Technical assistance is an intentional activity. This means that the technical assistance agency should take initiative to discern the clients' needs and provide services required rather than existing as a resource to be accessed only at the clients' initiative. The Title I Support System assumed a highly proactive posture vis-a-vis its clients to discover their needs and deliver services to meet them.

ASSUMPTION 2: Technical assistance is, at bottom, a helping activity that requires a building of trust, mutual respect, and credibility between client and helper in much the same way as more commonly recognized helping interactions (e.g., counseling, social service), do, in order to be effective.

This means that the technical assistance agency should make it its business to develop relationships with the clients it seeks to serve. Trohanis (1975) describes the technical assistant's role as consisting of not one but many jobs: resource helper, linker, consultant, moral supporter. The experience of NETWORK technical assistance staff supports this notion. It also suggests that in order to move in and out of different roles vis-a-vis an individual client--one day working on site with the client to develop a training workshop, and another day proposing to send a consultant on-site to help develop videotapes for the workshop, for example--the technical assistant must truly know the client with whom s/he is working; and the client must both know and feel known by the technical assistant to engage productively and comfortably in two such different helping situations.

Client receptivity to the services and the consultants a technical assistance agency offers is influenced by many factors. Discerning these influences when they exist and overcoming them when they present barriers to the provision of technical assistance, also argues for the development of credible, trusting relationships between the agency and the clients.

"Ultimately, the technical assistance agency must sincerely care about the clients and their mission." In making that statement, Trohanis (1975) is espousing a value position. It is a position that the Title I Support System's technical assistance approach also assumed.

ASSUMPTION 3: The design and delivery of technical assistance services are most profoundly influenced by two factors:

- *The specific goal(s) that the clients must achieve or the requirements they must meet, and*
- *The need to accommodate, adapt, and adjust the mode, content, and timing of technical assistance services to meet the "political and logistical features of the landscape within which the client must operate." (Stedman, 1974)*

The Title I Support System's approach implies that in order to adequately serve clients, the technical assistance staff should be responsible for asking, answering and acting upon the following question: "Who is being required to do what, in what setting and context, for what purpose?" Asking this question is directed at discerning what Harris (1978) has termed the client's "requirement for change."

> "A common mistake of technical assistance agencies is assuming the client can answer this question. In situations where the requirement for change is legislatively mandated (e.g. implementation of P.L. 94-142) it is often the case that the client hasn't a clue as to what meeting the requirement will entail beyond a lot of changes and more work.
>
> "Furthermore, (as in the case of NDN D/Ds or other model demonstration programs) the requirement for change (i.e. the task of disseminating the program) often comes with the award of a grant or the designation of exemplary project status to a school district or university, while the person who ends up with responsibility for seeing that the requirement is achieved may have had nothing to do with generating the requirement (i.e. submitting the grant request or developing the program.)
>
> "Examples such as these point out the folly of needs assessment approaches that rely solely upon the client's being able to articulate the needs that the requirements of his work are generating. Technical assistance staff must understand the client's requirement for change in all its complexity prior to engaging in diagnosis or service delivery."

ASSUMPTION 4: A technical assistance system should function as a network within which members initiate and maintain communication around specific problems and about strategies to solve the problems.

This assumption means that a technical assistance agency ought not think of itself as an entity separate from and outside of its client group, but rather as a structure for focusing and facilitating communication and interaction within a larger system of which it is a part. The Title I Support System assumed responsibility for the development of structures to facilitate and focus communication between and among the members of the

Title I sub-network.

Thompson (1976) has identified three categories of networks: formal networks, informal networks, and non-formal networks. The Title I Support System rested upon an approach to technical assistance that appears to have much in common with Thompson's "non-formal" network:

> "Nonformal networks, like informal networks, consist of interlocking personal relationships. But, as in a formal network, purposes are explicit...non-formal networks lay the conditions for and facilitate the formation of mixed personal/professional relationships. It is a matter, if you will, of 'deliberate serendipity.'...Network staff provides the stimulation and facilitation but the relationships thus created resemble those found in an informal network more closely than those found in a formal network....non-formal networks also arrange for their members to engage in the sorts of exchange, collaborative problem-solving, and so forth that they might naturally engage in, but to do so more frequently, thoroughly, and effectively."

In its strategies to support and maintain communication, sharing, problem-solving and mutual support among the client group, the Title I Support System provides what Miles and Lake (1975) described as "Low energy access to trusted information." They write;

> "In a good communications network it is possible with minimal expenditure of energy to give and obtain credible (believable, veridicial) information...The information seeker at one node needs to know whether the sender at another is honest and not self-deluding, is competent to understand the request, and is willing to transmit the sort of information requested. These assurances are most often met when sender and receiver have had previous face to face contact, enough to develop clear, positive views of each other's benevolence, competence and degree of authenticity."

Thus, the Support System not only sought to develop credibility with the client group, it also directed attention toward helping the clients to develop trust and credibility with one another and to realize their potential for benefitting from each other's experience, information and support.

KEY FEATURES OF THE SUPPORT SYSTEM APPROACH DERIVED FROM THE ASSUMPTIONS

Strategies for proactive involvement with the clients

Faced with the prospect of trying to serve 21 clients located all over the United States, most of whom were new at what they were doing and none of whom had ever worked with the Support System staff before, The NETWORK opted for using a highly proactive technical assistance approach. In a written description of the Title I Support System the Project Director identified three reasons why the agency assumed a proactive stance vis-a-vis its clients:

1. Many clients do not know what kind of help they need, therefore, if the Support System staff were to wait for the clients to request service, many needs would have gone unaddressed.

2. In order to adequately serve clients, it is important to know as much as possible about what they are trying to accomplish, therefore, the Support System staff assumed responsibility for initiating contact with the projects aimed at getting to know who they were and what they were doing.

3. Given the short life span of the Support System contract and the fact that Support System staff were an unknown quantity for the clients, it was important for the staff to establish early contact and credibility to insure that services would be provided before the end of the contract occurred.

Far from being described as simple initiative-taking, however, proactive behavior as demonstrated in the operation of the Title I Support System was characterized by the study consultant, Dr. Jeffrey Eiseman, as consisting of six different levels of activity. He described the levels of Support System proactivity as follows:

> "Proactivity is such a pervasive theme in the Title I Support System, it is possible to identify six different levels running along a continuum. At one end of the continuum, the technical assistant's aim was to obtain immediate and rather specific results; at the other end, the technical assistant concentrated

on increasing the favorability of conditions for service with no specific result in mind.

Level 1 - *Intervention*: If the technical assistant recognized that a problem existed related to a client or group of clients, and that she could take constructive action--whether or not the client(s) asked for it, she did so. An example was calling a meeting (and running it) in order to clarify and present to the funding agency the specific concerns of a sub-group of clients (the PIPs).

Level 2 - *Opportunity offering*: On at least two occasions the technical assistant made a judgement that several projects were at a stage where they could benefit from help in particular areas. The response was to design and offer (on a take-it-or-leave-it basis) two and a half day workshops directed at specific topics or problems. Thirteen of the 21 projects chose to "take it"--each at their own expense.

Level 3 - *Diagnosis*: One Support System's strategy for needs assessment was to lay out a series of tasks representing steps or milestones to accomplishing the job of a D/D project. Each project was asked to consider the extent to which it was prepared to accomplish each step. The technical assistant then took initiative to contact and engage the D/Ds in planning ways to accomplish the steps or solve the problems that seemed to pose obstacles to accomplishing them.

Level 4 - *Explicit resource building*: When the technical assistant perceived that the clients as a group or as individuals might benefit from having certain resource materials on hand, she assembled and distributed the materials. She excerpted some of these materials from existing sources and created others. Typically she sent a cover letter explaining what she was sending, what information need it was intended to address,and what applications it might have.

Level 5 - *Implicit resource building*: Whether consciously or unconsciously, the technical assistance staff frequently modeled transportable or "adoptable" helping behavior when working with the clients. Several clients reported that they had incorporated techniques, design strategies, materials formats, or sessions approaches which the technical assistance staff had used with them into their own workshops. At least two projects also emulated the newsletter networking strategy that the Support System employed.

Level 6 - *Context Creation*: At this level of proactivity the technical assistant worked like a chess expert whose strategy at the beginning of the game, rather than being directed at the ultimate objective (securing a checkmate), focuses attention on the intermediate goal of securing the strongest possible position; at the outset, the chess expert has no idea of how to attain the ultimate objective, but when an opportunity for action arises, the expert plans to be optimally ready.

Similarly, level 6 proactivity is directed not at achieving a particular end, but at creating conditions that will facilitate achieving that end, when the time is right. The technical assistant felt that unless she had created an adequate context, when the opportunity to be helpful arose, no vehicle would be in place to alert her to the situation. Or--should a client ask for assistance--she recognized the chances that the relationship with the client would be so underdeveloped that neither party would have enough knowledge of the other's modus operandi or enough trust in the other's judgement, discretion, and competence to engage in a very productive interchange. What I have called level 6 proactivity was a critical aspect of the Title I Support System strategy."

Emphasis on defining the client's tasks and operating context

The Support System's strategies for proactivity had explicit objectives and ones which the Support System staff clearly communicated to the clients: the objectives of the Support System's technical assistance were to help the D/D projects define the job or tasks that they needed to accomplish to help them identify resources (in a variety of forms) to assist them in their tasks, and to help them use the resources effectively.

To aid in the accomplishment of these objectives the Support System staff developed a set of focusing questions which were used as guidelines for defining the tasks the clients (individually and as a group) were trying to accomplish, the context within which they needed to accomplish, and the ways in which technical assistance could be of use in helping get the job done. These questions were not used to interview clients but rather served as a kind of mental checklist which Support System staff used to develop a plan for delivering technical assistance services to an individual client or group of clients.

1. What is the context (political, historical, fiscal, organizational) within which the client(s) must perform?

2. What are the expectations for the client(s) performance? Who holds them?

3. What, therefore, is the role (and what are the tasks) the client(s) must accomplish?

4. To what extent is the client in touch with the context and expectations surrounding the role she/he holds?

5. To what extent has the client defined the task requirements of the role?

6. What is the client's assessment of the extent to which she/he possesses the knowledge/skill/resources to accomplish the task(s)?

7. What problems must be solved, questions answered, information provided, skills learned, support available in order for the client to accomplish the tasks and fulfill the role requirements?

8. What role can/should the Support System play in solving the problem, answering the questions, providing the information, teaching the skill, or extending the support?

Developing personalized relationships with and among the clients

According to the Support System Project Director, developing supportive personalized relationships with the clients she was serving was not something that she specifically set out to do; rather, it appears to have been an outgrowth of caring about the clients as people and as professionals. She talked about her relationships with her clients in an August, 1978 interview:

> *"I'm not sure that providing moral support is really a strategy at all; it is more the kind of thing that you can't help but do when people that you work with and are beginning to know and care about are facing very difficult situations. If the technical assistance agency's mission is to be sure you're helping your clients in any way you can--and ours is--then clients and technical assistant have to know each other enough to be able to work together. They have to trust you in order to accept help from you. You've got to know what's going on with them in order to help them.*
>
> *What's a supportive relationship? It's one where the client feels that it's okay to ask questions that seem naive. Lots of times people call and say 'I think this is a stupid question, but I know I can ask you...' It's a relationship in which the client has a pretty good sense that you know what he or she is up against, that you really know what life on the firing line is like, what the issues are, what the grey areas are, what it's like to stand in front of 500 people and make a presentation or develop a workshop for 30 people.*

Providing a supportive relationship for the clients means that as technical assistant you accept responsibility for getting the relationship started and keeping it going. It means you make the phone calls just to say hello and find out how things are going; you mark your calendar with the date that the Arizona project is running its first training workshop and you call to say good luck the day before; you make sure that when one project does something they're proud of, the other projects hear about it, even though they may not think to tell them.

We found that behaving this way after awhile causes the clients to respond in kind. Once they knew that we cared about what they were doing, they began calling us to say hello and share some news, they began calling and specifically asking for help because they'd already experienced receiving it. And best of all, from our point of view, they started interacting with each other that way: calling each other to talk over problems and common concerns; asking for time to consult with each other at workshops; using the newsgram to respond to peers' requests for help. Watching the way they've developed helping relationships with each other is what has made this project so exciting for me."

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEMS FOR EDUCATION: A REVIEW OF RECENT LITERATURE

Just what constitutes a technical assistance system is emerging in the literature. At the general level, Lillie and Black (1974) have defined seven principles of support system organization and management which, to varying degrees, operate in many currently functioning technical assistance programs:

1. *Development of an authoritative base* - "If services are to be delivered to a set of educational service programs, it is imperative that the clients view them as the most up-to-date and appropriate assistance currently available within the field."

2. *Mutual Trust* - "In delivering technical assistance services to any client, it is imperative that mutual trust be established between the staff of the support system and the staff of the client system."

3. *Confidentiality* - "As program needs are identified, they must remain confidential between the client and the support system if the support system is going to continue to be of help."

4. *Continuous and sequential technical assistance* "If the client knows that the support system is available for continuous support, each technical assistance incident seems to be more effective."

5. *Comprehensiveness* - "The ability to respond comprehensively across all areas of the client's organizational needs is paramount. As educational organizations move from initial levels to a higher order of organizational development, the needs that a support system must address will change."

6. *Access to resources* - "The technical assistance system must be knowledgeable of a wide variety of outside resources and able to provide those resources to clients as needed."

7. *Client/consultant compatibility* "The success or failure of support services is determined in part by how compatible that consultant is with the personnel and program being served."

Beyond these organizational principles, there is little concensus on the nature and characteristics of a technical assistance system either in the literature or in practice. Gallagher (1974) defines technical assistance as: "help from an outside agency designed to improve the competence of educational service delivery personnel by increasing their management, organizational or program skills, and/or their available information relative to their multiple tasks of educational service delivery." Stedman (1974), on the other hand, views the technical assistance system as a communications network.

> "A technical assistance system is an organization with unique structural and functional characteristics. The purpose of the system is to transfer information from one place to another. It is a network between at least two other organizations. It relies heavily on the creativity, endurance, and advocacy posture of its membership.
>
> "Members initiate and maintain communication around specific problems and about strategies to solve the problems. Everything in the technical assistance system is directed toward the initiation and maintenance of this communication. The structure and function of the system are partly determined by the content or information the system is appointed to deliver, partly by the characteristics of the 'customers' or client organizations, and partly by the character and style of the technical assistance organization's membership."

Probably the broadest definition of technical assistance was advanced by McConkey (1976): "Assistance means help. Technical can mean several things; in this context the most appropriate synonym is probably specialized. Specialized help. That which can be provided only by unique persons or agencies--ones prepared to respond to the idiosyncratic concerns or problems of a client group engaged in a particular kind of work or enterprise." Such a definition implies that the substance of technical assistance services is determined largely by the nature and requirements of the client group.

However the term is defined, the characteristics of technical assistance systems are determined, according to Stedman (1974), by either the structure within the client organization or by the structural relations between the clients and the technical assistance group. In all cases, the structure and function of the technical assistance effort must "combine and balance 1) the design to implement strategies for specific goals and objectives and 2) the design to accommodate, adapt and/or adjust to political and logistical features of the landscape on which the client organization must operate."

From a review of the literature derived from current practice, it appears that the characteristics of technical assistance systems can be described as points on various continua.

- *The internal/external continuum* - Where a technical assistance system falls on this continuum is determined according to who delivers the services--the staff of the technical assistance group or external consultants contracted by that group for specific assignments. Some technical assistance systems strike a balance between internal and external delivery of services based on variables such as available staff, budget, and the characteristics and needs of the client group. Stedman (1974) distinguishes between the extremes of the internal/external continuum in his discussion of proximal (internal) technical assistance and distal (external) technical assistance, presents the advantages and disadvantages of each, and makes recommendations regarding which is most appropriate for what type of client group.

- *The advocacy/neutrality continuum* - The posture of a technical assistance system in relationship to the client group it serves typically falls on a continuum between that advocacy and neutrality; a system's position on this continuum tends to be a function both of the philosophical orientation of the program and the needs of the clients. According to Deno (1974), early technical assistance efforts in the field of special education utilized "project advocates" who served to promote the legitimate pursuits of the client group with the funding agency, host institutions, project staff, and related organizations. This kind of advocacy approach is also advanced by Stedman (1974) who notes that "since the technical assistance system is a renewal system and advocates change, its members must be advocates for the client organizations and for the groups served by the client organizations."

  At the other extreme of the continuum are technical assistance systems that remain neutral with respect to the political climate of the field and the relationship of the clients to their funding agencies. The technical assistance system in a neutral posture does not advocate a particular process, approach, or methodology.

- *The proactive/responsive continuum* - This continuum represents the different ways in which technical assistance systems view their goals. For some agencies the primary goal is to respond to client-initiated requests as they are received; these technical assistance efforts may be properly viewed as responsive. Other technical assistance systems have helped their clients become more effective problem identifiers and problem solvers as a goal; these often take initiative in identifying problems or needs their clients face and, therefore, may be categorized as proactive.

- *The process/product continuum* Where a technical assistance system falls on this continuum is largely a function of the orientation and training of the system staff.. While definitions of these terms vary, a process orientation is typically characterized by attention to the structure, function, and organization of the client system while a product orientation involves attention to the content areas in which the client group works. Although technical assistance systems tend not to fall on either extreme, most are weighted more heavily to one end of the continuum or the other.

  Stedman (1974) suggests that "a technical assistance system staff must be populated by both process oriented and product oriented personnel so that the system will have almost always a variety of leadership and operational styles in the determination of policy or operational issues." Crandall (1977) suggests a similar combination of process and product skills in his paper on linking agents.

- *Wide range of services v. limited range of services* - Most technical assistance systems may be defined by the range of services they provide clients. Some systems are limited to addressing specific areas or offering a certain kind of service, other systems address wide ranging needs in different ways.

- *The user-defined needs/needs assessment continuum* - This continuum describes the ways in which the clients' needs for assistance are determined. Some systems rely on the clients to define their own needs to which the agency then responds accordingly. Other technical assistance systems attempt to verify the needs expressed by the clients or independently initiate needs assessment strategies as part of the technical assistance effort.

- *The personal/impersonal continuum* - The extent to which personalized interaction and relationship building play a role in the delivery of technical assistance is another continuum on which support systems vary.

While descriptions of current, functioning support systems are contributing to a growing literature on technical assistance, less common in the knowledge base are studies or analyses which asses the effectiveness of various technical assitance strategies or their relationship to improved capacity on the part of the client group. Some attempts have been made, however, to examine the relative effectiveness of various technical assistance approaches and two documents of note in this regard are discussed below.

Trohanis (1975) discusses the technical assistance concept and operational framework that has guided the development and delivery of services by two national technical assistance programs with which he has been associated over the past four years, and provides ten *informal recommendations* for other technical assistance agencies, based on that experience:

1. *A technical assistance agency cannot be all things to all people. It is imperative to delimit the agency's content and resource parameters around such factors as: client audience, mission, organizational development and funding.*

2. *A technical assistance agency is a resource agency, moral supporter, helping agent, and linker which keeps clients in touch with new ideas and with one another. Hence, the agency must be trusting, authoritative, credible: it should not be perceived as a formal evaluator, competitor, or snob.*

3. *A technical assistance agency must be flexible and responsible to its clients needs.*

4. *A technical assistance agency should have a clear and synergistic framework...*

5. *A technical assistance agency must realize that the timing of its service is crucial. If a client wants help with a brochure design at a prescribed time and date, it is vital that this is provided on or as close as possible to that date.*

6. *A technical assistance agency must have a qualitative mix of delivery strategies...That is, it should make available worthwhile print and non-print resources, workshops and demonstrations.*

7. *A technical assistance agency must be aware that client receptivity to service varies depending upon numerous factors such as supra-organizational conflict, entry points and timing.*

8. *A technical assistance agency probably operates best when it draws upon and utilizes a variety of talent.*

9. *A technical assistance agency should establish liaison with related organizations that have an impact on or for the client group.*

10. *Ultimately, a technical assistance agency must sincerely care about its clients and their mission. This means that long-term, continuous, mutual relationships and communications are vital.*

Over a two-year period, the Center for New Schools (CNS) studied six technical assistance groups providing long-term technical assistance to various school-related client groups (Moore, Schepers, Holmes, & Blair, 1977). In addition to looking at the internal functioning of individual technical assistance groups, CNS examined the processes by which the agencies provided assistance to their clients, compared similarities and differences among the six groups, and studied those techniques which led to greater or lesser effectiveness in particular circumstances.

Among their findings were that effective technical assistance groups became increasingly sophisticated at *mapping* the client systems with whom they worked and were better able to predict how their actions would affect various key actors within the system. Similarly, technical assistance groups moved, over time, toward the development of a technical assistance strategy with increasing coherence, stated concretely enough to have action implications in a variety of specific situations. CNS characterizes technical assistance strategies as taking about five to seven years to develop fully, progressing through the two developmental stages noted below.

In the first stage, which might be termed program development, the technical assistance agency tries out elements of its approach with varied success and analyses its experiences; in the second, or program refinement stage, the technical assistance group modifies its strategies through continued service delivery and analysis, and may also perfect methods for training other groups to deliver services through that strategy.

CNS also looked at the variety of technical assistance delivery strategies used by the six agencies and identified five modes frequently used with clients: structured experiences (e.g., workshops,) on-site assistance on a particular issue, modeling a specific technique, provision of materials, and independent intervention (e.g. writing a proposal for a client.) Combinations of the first four modes were found to result in effective technical assistance, while use of the last was found to create dependency on the part of the client rather than to build capability.

The study's findings also underscored the importance of a technical assistance group delivering service with the effect of encouraging independent initiative on the part of the client system, and discouraging dependency. Written technical assistance agreements with clearly delineated client responsibilities were found to contribute to successful outcomes, as were clearly stated expectations regarding the scope and nature of services, and technical assistance delivery system designs which emphasized constant transfer of knowledge and skills to the clients.

In addition, certain technical assistance activities were found to be associated with changes that lasted in the client system beyond the withdrawal of the technical assistance agency's services. Successful technical assistance groups.

1. *Became increasingly sophisticated over time in analyzing their client group(s), predicting the effects their actions would have, and acting upon their analysis.*

2. *Focused on "central rather than peripheral social processes and structures" in the client system.*

3. *Attempted to develop support for change in significant parts of the client system, including commitment on the part of decision-makers.*

4. *Emphasized constant knowledge transfer and skill building in their assistance including transfer of skills in analyzing the context within which the client operates, and alternating action and analysis.*

5. *Sought to develop an attitude on the part of the client system that they were learning new skills, solving problems, and were part of a broader educational movement.*

CHAPTER THREE

THE STUDY QUESTIONS AND METHODS

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THE STUDY QUESTIONS

To explore the areas of concern to USOE — the needs of D/D projects and the role of technical assistance in addressing the needs — five questions (with sub-questions, in some cases) were identified to guide the Study effort.

1. What were the needs of the 21 D/D projects under study?
   a. What demands did national dissemination via the Title I/ NDN strategy place upon the projects?
   b. What were the need areas or problems for which technical assistance was provided?

2. What technical assistance services were provided to meet the projects' needs?
   a. What modes of technical service were provided?
   b. What need areas were addressed?

3. What characteristics of the 21 projects appear related to variations in the provision of technical assistance?
   a. What characteristics appear related to variations in the overall amount of assistance provided?
   b. What characteristics appear related to variations in the modes of types of service provided?
   c. What characteristics appear related to variations in the content of services provided?
   d. What additional project characteristics did the technical assistance staff observe to be of significance with regard to variations in the provision of technical assistance?

4. What other factors appear to have influenced the delivery and use of technical assistance?

5. According to the 21 D/D projects, what was the utility and what were the effects of the technical assistance they received from the Support System?

DATA SOURCES AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES USED TO ANSWER THE STUDY QUESTIONS

The Support System project included documentation procedures that supplied much of the data needed to answer the five study questions. Several different communication logs, client contact reports, and planning/assessment instruments maintained by the Support System staff were available for analysis.

1. Client contact reports - These multi-page documents described in a consistent format, the purpose and substance of every contact (in-person, by phone) that the Support System staff had with each client. Each report also included the technical assistant's analysis and observations about the contact, and a listing of specific follow-up steps or actions to result from the contact.

2. Telephone logs - Maintained on a monthly basis, these logs documented all telephone contacts Support System staff had with clients and with others (USOE personnel, other technical assistance agencies, etc.), noting briefly the purpose of the contact and whether the call was initiated by the Support System staff or the caller.

3. Technical assistance logs - This log summarized all requests for technical assistance, the date of the request, and the date and the nature of technical assistance provided.

4. Client feedback forms - Each on-site visit and multi-day workshop was evaluated by the recipients of the service. Feedback forms asked both for clients' assessment of the usefulness of the service in meeting their needs and for inforamtion about any additional needs or problems the technical assistance transaction may have uncovered.

5. Needs assessment and planning instruments - Pencil/paper assessment and planning procedures were employed by the Support System to gather information about the needs of the client group at different points throughout the life of the project.

Samples of each of these items are included in Appendix A and Appendix B.

To supplement the information included in the documents described above, the study employed three additional means of data gathering.

1. Observation - A research associate was assigned full-time to the Support System study from January - November, 1978. In addition to reviewing and analyzing Support System-produced documentation, this person acted as a field observer at a number of Title I/NDN activities, including:
    - two regional Title I/NDN awareness conferences
    - the NDN mid-winter conference
    - two technical assistance workshops conducted by the Title I Support System

    Informal interaction and discussion with the client projects, USOE personnel, conference contractors, and others involved in the Title I dissemination effort were part of each field observation. Field notes based on observations and interactions at these events were an important source of data for answering the study questions.

2. Interviews with the Support System Director - The study research associate conducted regular interviews with the Support System Project Director during January - May 1978. The purpose of each interview was to

explore the technical assitant's perspective on certain issues, themes, or topics identified by the research associate in ongoing data analysis related to the study questions. Interviews were taped and interview notes were maintained by the study staff for analysis.

3. Interviews with the client projects - In June, 1978 the research associate conducted a telephone interivew with each of the Support System's 21 client projects. The interviews were guided by an interview protocol. Multiple choice questions, open-ended questions, and informal discussion were used to elicit perceptions of each project's dissemination coordinator (or other person with major responsibility for dissemination) regarding the utility and effects of the technical assistance provided them by the Support System. In addition, questions about project background and the dissemination experience of the coordinator were also asked. A copy of the interview protocol is included in Appendix C.

The matrix below shows which data sources were used to answer each of the five study questions.

DATA SOURCES FOR ANSWERING STUDY QUESTIONS

STUDY QUESTIONS	Support System Documentation	Field Observer Notes	Interviews with Support System Director	Study Staff Interviews with 21 D/D projects	Other:
1.a.	X	X	X		Work statements, RFP, and proposals for D/D projects. Public statements and materials describing the Title I/NDN dissemination effort.
1.b.	X	X	X		
2.a.	X				
2.b.	X				
3.a.	X				
3.b.	X				
3.c.	X				
3.d.	X		X		
4.	X	X	X		
5.				X	Written reports/feedback from clients.

DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

As described above, the data sources for the study included both objective, quantitative information (e.g., number of site visits completed, level of client project funding, etc.) and subjective, qualitative material such as the technical assistance staff's written observations, notes from interviews by study staff with the Support System Project Director, and notes and impressions recorded by the study staff during field observation.

ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

Interpretive procedures for qualitative data involved careful review and content analysis to identify themes, topics, or perceptions discussed by the technical assistance staff in written reports and interviews which seemed particularly salient. Attention was also given to exploring the impressions or observations of technical assistance staff which that seemed to be supported by field observation and vice versa. With regard to the subjective data, however, the only test of significance that has been applied is the extent to which the observations have face validity for the study staff and accurately reflect the technical assistance staff's perceptions about their own experience.

The first part of Study Question 1, the last part of Study Question 3, and all of Study Question 4 rely on the analysis and interpretation of qualitative information for their answers.

ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

Two methods of quantitative analysis were used: the compilation of descriptive statistics and cross-project tabulation of statistics. By descriptive statistics we mean that we did frequency counts of modes, amount, and content

of technical assistance transactions and computed averages for each count by project.

Analysis of the data regarding the amount and types of assistance provided involved:

1. counting the total number of technical assistance transactions for each project;
2. assigning scores for the type and frequency of each transaction;
3. computing overall scores for the total amount of assistance received.

To examine data regarding the content of technical assistance provided we performed content analyses of documents describing technical assistance transactions to identify categories and sub-categories of need areas addressed. We then did frequency counts to determine how many transactions each project received involving each need area.

To perform cross-project tabulations, we identified a number of characteristics along which the projects could be grouped for comparison and contrast with regard to amount, type, and content of techncial assistance provided such as funding level, funding source, experience of the project's dissemination coordinator, distance from the technical assistance agency, etc. Using the technical assistance received, and the number of content transactions for each need area addressed per project, we then computed the average amount and type scores and average number of content transactions across projects in groupings by different characteristics such as funding level, funding source, etc.

Given the volume of material available for analysis in the Support System documentation, content analysis proved to be a much more time consuming process than the simple counting and sorting of technical assistance transactions. Therefore, data regarding the content of technical assistance provided was collected and analyzed only during the first eight months of the Support System's operation, and findings concerning the needs projects had

and the content of the assistance provided are based on data from that period: October 1977 - May 1978. Data for modes and amounts of assistance provided, however, were analyzed for the entire period of Support System operation (including one month of pre-contract service): October 1977 - November 1978.

The responses to part of Study Question 1 and all of Study Question 2 are based on frequency counts of the mode and content of technical assistance transactions as described in Support System contact reports and technical assistance logs.

The variations in technical assistance provided to the 21 projects described in response to Question 3 were identified as a result of the cross-project tabulations based on frequency counts and computed averages as described above.

Study Question 5 relied exclusively on information provided by the 21 projects in telephone interviews conducted by the study staff in June 1978. Analysis of the interview data involved tallying projects' responses to multiple choice questions and computing average scores.

For example, in response to the question on how useful the projects found technical assistance directed at helping them understand the dissemination process, two D/Ds reported that they did not receive assistance in tnis area; no D/Ds rated this assistance "not useful" (a response which was scored as a 1); seven projects found this assistance "somewhat useful" (scored as a 2); and twelve projects rated the assistance in this area "very useful" (scored as 3). Thus the average utility rating for this technical assistance item was computed as follows:

$$\frac{(0 \times 1) + (7 \times 2) + (12 \times 3)}{(0 + 7 + 12)} = \frac{(0 + 14 + 36)}{19} = \frac{50}{19} = 2.63$$

The report of findings related to Study Question 5 also includes several quotes from projects' responses to the open-ended interview questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

STUDY FINDINGS

CHAPTER FOUR STUDY FINDINGS
PART I

QUESTION 1: WHAT WERE THE NEEDS OF THE 21 PROJECTS UNDER STUDY?

INTRODUCTION

To answer this question the study compiled information from several sources and analyzed it in the following ways.

1. Data from the needs assessment and planning surveys completed by the projects were reviewed and tallied.
2. Contact reports describing each technical assistance transaction were analyzed for information about the needs that prompted the assistance.
3. Written observations on the progress of the Support System and the unfolding of the Title I dissemination strategy maintained by the Project Director were examined for their analysis of problems the projects were encountering.
4. Written materials and public statements by USOE officials describing the scope and purpose of the Title I/NDN dissemination effort were reviewed to derive a sense of the expectations they set for the projects to meet.
5. Notes from the NETWORK researcher's observations of the Title I strategy in action at the regional awareness conferences were reviewed and the observations there compared with those contained in the other data sources.

What we found was that the needs that the projects experienced seemed to fall logically into five categories:

Needs for moral and logistical support.

Needs for orientation.

Needs for help with specific dissemination tasks.

Needs for help with management tasks or concerns.

Needs for information and assistance about relating with others involved in national dissemination.

We also found that in order to adequately explore the projects' needs for technical assistance we needed to analyze the context within which the projects were operating. Since the projects experienced needs for help within the context of their involvement in the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy we decided to examine the strategy and ask what demands it placed upon the projects. Therefore, we have divided the first study question into two sub-questions.

a. What demands did national dissemination via the Title I/NDN strategy place upon the projects?

b. What were the need areas or problems for which technical assistance was provided?

Each question is addressed in turn below.

WHAT DEMANDS DID NATIONAL DISSEMINATION VIA THE TITLE I/NDN STRATEGY PLACE UPON THE PROJECTS?

The study identified several demands related to the nature and timing of the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy that appear to have influenced the projects' needs for technical assistance.

The demand for quick start up

As discussed in Chapter 2, a special characteristic of the 21 D/D projects was the fact that they had been selected to take part in USOE's Title I/NDN dissemination strategy. The timeline upon which the strategy was operating influenced the timeline upon which the projects were asked to operate in a way that required a very quick start-up for most of them. Except for the three projects who had been operating in the NDN since 1975, the Title I D/Ds had, depending upon the source of their funding, either five months or two months from the time they received their contracts until the time the first regional awareness conference brought them face to face with 400 representatives of potential adopter districts.

The 9 NDN-funded D/Ds (of whom 3 had been operating since 1975) had received their contracts in June, 1977, before the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy had been fully planned. None of the projects was aware that the strategy was being developed or that they would be asked to participate in it when they developed their proposals for funding. Thus, neither their work plans nor their operating budgets reflected the time, staff or dollars required to be up and running for five major awareness activities by November, 1977. In fact, a number of these projects were viewing the entire first year of NDN D/D funding

as start up and planning time. This was reflected in their proposals which generally outlined plans for developing awareness materials and presentations, modifying their existing staff development programs for use in adopter training, generating awareness and building relationships with NDN State Facilitators, and in some cases, projecting beginning work with 3-10 adopters by the end of the first year. This schedule of activities and the funds that supported it (generally ranging from $25,000-$35,000 for a first year D/D) were very different from what might have been expected of a project funded in June with the expectation of having had contact with approximately 1,500 persons from potential adopter districts by the end of January.

For the 8 PIP Disseminator projects funded by OPBE, the situation was even more compressed. These projects received signed contracts in late September for work which included full participation in the five regional conferences scheduled to begin six weeks later. As noted earlier, however, several of these projects were in a different psychological position from their NDN-funded counterparts in that they had not sought USOE funding in order to disseminate their projects nationally. They were asked in mid-late summer to respond to sole source solicitations for the purpose of serving as disseminators of the PIP materials developed from their programs. Thus, many of these projects had not only never considered participating in the NDN -- some of them had never even heard of it! Not having considered national dissemination of their projects, these districts in most cases did not have staff immediately on hand to carry out the responsibilities such activity required. Most of the proposals they prepared identified a first task to be accomplished as the hiring of a dissemination coordinator -- a task which, in at least one case took four of the eight weeks the project had to prepare itself. The magnitude of the demand created by the short gear-up time thus begins to become apparent.

The remaining four projects -- all Title I/migrant education programs -- were in a similar situation, with a slightly different twist. At least two of the four projects had applied for D/D funding

and for different reasons had not received it. Like the other projects invited to participate in the Title I dissemination effort they were provided with some funds to defray the travel costs associated with the five regional conferences. But unlike the other projects they had no money to specifically underwrite the costs of preparing awareness materials (leaving aside the question of time required to prepare them) and no staff time being supported specifically for engaging in activities related to national dissemination. Thus, the migrant projects faced the demands to gear up for a major outreach effort with very little time, and no funds specifically ear-marked for that purpose.

The pressure of the strategy's quick start up in turn created other demands, some of which related to the immediate tasks the projects had to complete (develop a brochure describing the project, hire a dissemination coordinator, put together two presentations -- a 2 minute capsule, and a one-hour in-depth overview, etc.), and some of which had to do with simply understanding what the effort was all about (how many awareness conferences, where are they going to be held, how many people will be there, whom do I call if I have a question, etc.).

The demand to define adoptable components

Once the effort was actually underway, however, other demands made themselves felt in very short order. In the process of preparing their presentations and materials and soon after that in their face to face interactions with the conference participants (their potential adopters) the projects faced a demand that arose again and again -- the requirement that they be able to define precisely what it was they had to disseminate, and to describe what an adoption of that entity would entail. This demand had two sources.

Conference participants asked questions about how much they would have to do in order to be considered to be adopting the program. Several of the projects -- because they had never thought about it before, and because they hadn't had time to think about it in the rush to

get started -- found themselves unable to answer the question. They knew what they did in their projects, and they could describe it completely, accurately, and in many cases, movingly. Having been asked the question, for many of them, was the first time they recognized that they hadn't sorted out (with any precision) what the essential elements or key components of their projects were.

The other source of the demand to define what they were disseminating and how it would look in something called an adoption was the fact that the projects had the goal of 300 adoptions to achieve. The number forced the projects (and many other people associated with the special dissemination effort) to ask again and again, *"What constitutes an adoption?" "What is it that our project is disseminating?" "What do we expect an adopter to adopt?"*

Not surprisingly, the projects looked to USOE for guidance on these matters. In many ways, the responses that they got conflicted with one another thereby creating another demand: that the projects be able to understand and sort out the conflicting responses they were getting from USOE. This demand is sufficiently complex and important that it is treated below in a separate section.

As noted earlier, when the conferences actually got underway the projects found themselves face to face with potential adopters, NDN State Facilitators and Title I Coordinators. Their questions presented new demands. Three were of particular concern.

The demand to explain the NDN and the concept of adoption to uninformed adopters

Because the participants for the regional awareness conferences were local Title I personnel selected for attendance by State Title I Coordinators, the participants had in many cases <u>not</u> heard of the NDN and had no frame of reference for knowing what it was. In the usual NDN modus operandi, when D/Ds come face to face with adopters it is because a State Facilitator

has caused that to happen; the adopters are somewhat knowledgeable not only about the D/D's project, but about the State Facilitator's operation, and the larger enterprise that brings the D/D, the adopter and the State Facilitator together, the NDN.

Title I and the Division of Educational Replication sent messages to the State Title I Coordinators and the State Facilitators respectively urging that they cooperate to identify conference participants and inform them about the NDN and the role of the State Facilitators. The letters of invitation that the confernece participants finally received did describe the event as an NDN activity. However, the primary responsibility for inviting the local participants had been that of the State Title I Coordinator, and the participants came with a Title I frame of reference and, often little awareness of the National Diffusion Network.

In the course of the awareness presentations the projects were asked many questions, not only about their projects and the procedures for adopting them but also about the National Diffusion Network: What is it? What does it have to do with your project? What does it have to do with me? What is a State Facilitator? Answering these questions was not difficult for some of the projects; but others were brought up short. The role of the State Facilitator and the purpose and operation of the NDN were topics that several of them had not yet mastered for their own purposes, much less from an adopter's point of view. Given that some of the dissemination coordinators had been on the job for two months or less, they had not immediately focused on getting familiar with the larger context.

Thus, the projects had to be able to explain the National Diffusion Network to a largely uninformed audience of potential adopters who were gaining access to their projects without the benefit of having been screened or *linked* to the D/D by the State Facilitator.

The demand to understand the Title I context within which the strategy was operating

Many of the projects and most of the participants appeared to have come to the conference with very little awareness of the fact that the Federal Title I program guidelines, which lay down requirements for the operation of Title I projects at the local level, are subject to modification and interpretation at the State level, according to the particular needs and conditions within each state. The Federal guidelines make it clear that such modification and interpretation is legal so long as the Federal guidelines are adhered to. In most cases, in fact, state regulations set more specific and concrete specifications for the operation of Title I projects than would be feasible to set at the Federal level. The upshot of the projects not being aware of this point of view was that when faced, as some were, with questions from participants about how they could operate a particular feature of their project since that feature was clearly *illegal* -- the projects were completely unprepared to respond. In most of these cases, it appeared that the definition of legality the asker(s) were using derived from varying state Title I regulations. Not being aware that a project might be in compliance with the Federal guidelines but -- in some respects -- not *legal* according to a certain state's regulations, both projects and participants at some points appeared confused and frustrated trying to communicate with one another.

Thus, early on, the projects had to field some occasionally disconcerting questions for which -- initially at least -- they had no good answers.

The demand to define adoption procedures

As the foregoing discussion should have made clear, a number of the projects just barely had time to catch their breath and put their brochures together before they were on the stump. A third demand they experienced arising out of the conferences came about when they were asked questions

about their training or their services. It is safe to say that the majority of the projects at least realized that they had more work to do beyond simply telling people about their projects. But, with few exceptions, most had not had the time to develop the plans and procedures that would have allowed them with any certainty to describe their training workshop or their range of adopter services to an inquiring conference participant. Still, the questions were asked -- by State Facilitators and USOE personnel, as well as potential adopters -- and attempts to respond to them brought home the demand of the work yet to be done, even as the projects were in the process of learning how to do the work they were doing.

Logistical demands

There were two *logistical* demands that the projects' participation in the conferences imposed upon them. The first was the requirement to interact with and distinguish among a very large number of significant individuals involved in the Title I/NDN dissemination effort. Because the effort was being collaboratively run by several different USOE agencies, personnel from all of them had been communicating with and making demands of the projects from the start. Three or four individuals from the Division of Education for the Disadvantaged, eight or ten more from the Division of Educational Replication and the Dissemination and Utilization Unit, and staff from the Migrant Education portion of DED attended most of the conferences, and communicated regularly with the projects. In addition, four different sets of people from the conference contractors' agencies took part, as did various researchers -- including those associated with the present study and those involved in AIR/RMC's study of USOE's PIP Dissemination activities. Finally, each conference brought together ten to twelve NDN State Facilitators, State Title I Coordinators, and Migrant Education Coordinators.

At a practical level sorting out all the roles represented by that many people even without attaching names to jobs, could be quite a task. But, in order to carry out their jobs most effectively, that is, in order

to put the information they received in the proper context, and in order to insure that when the time came they would involve the right people at the right time in the right situation, the D/Ds had to know who was who and who did what.

The second *logistical* demand imposed by Title I dissemination strategy was the travel schedule it required. Although the timing and duration of the conferences was not much different from the kind of schedule many experienced D/Ds in great demand are accustomed to, for the newer projects, the travel required time away from home that they had not, psychologically prepared for. They recognized the number of days away from the office that they would be spending but, in the absence of any experience, they were unprepared for the time and energy demand that steady, nationwide travel imposes and for the extent to which being away from home prevents carrying on with the jobs one must perform there.

Demands created by the expectation to take part in regular NDN activities

For those projects receiving dissemination funding (regardless of which agency was funding them), the demand to carry out all of the activities associated with program dissemination from awareness to evaluation was spelled out in their contracts. For the projects without dissemination contracts (four Migrant Education projects), the demand to provide services beyond awareness presentations was implicit in their agreement to participate in the regional awareness conferences.

Neither the NDN State Facilitators nor the potential adopters knew (in any detail, if at all) that the projects varied dramatically in the extent to which they were being funded to disseminate their projects. The fact that they were presenting in the regional awareness conferences seemed on the face of it to demonstrate that the projects were willing and able to follow through on the interest the conferences would generate.

Following up on interest generated in the typical NDN modus operandi can occur in a number of ways. Depending upon the level of interest and commitment an adopter has reached, the next step following an awareness conference might be to carry out a needs assessment to examine the potential of the adopter/project match more closely. In other cases, the project and the adopter working with the State Facilitator might move directly to setting up a training session. In still other instances, the State Facilitator might request that the D/D project come into the state to conduct another awareness conference. Typically, this happens when only a very few individuals from a district have had the chance to observe the project or interact with the project staff in person. To make these trips cost-effective, a State Facilitator often arranges for the attendance of individuals from other districts who might be interested, but who have not previously heard the presentation.

Since USOE intended and the projects expected that participation in the regional awareness conferences would result in adoptions mediated by State Facilitators, it was incumbent upon D/Ds to be able to respond to any and all of these kinds of follow-up requests once the regional conferences had ended.

The demand for a response, however, was one that not all the projects were prepared to meet. The four migrant projects, in particular, had no money earmarked to support dissemination-related travel beyond the five regional conferences. Even if they had staff available and were prepared to carry through with, say, training an adopter, in some instances they had to say, "We cannot come to train you and we cannot do any more awareness unless you can cover all expenses associated with this activity."

In other cases, though the projects had funds to operate, they found themselves being asked to go back out into state after state to repeat essentially the same level of awareness generating that they had just completed in the regional conferences. With their time, energy, and budget somewhat depleted from the regional awareness conferences, many felt obliged not to say no, but reluctant to say yes to State Facilitator requests for more awareness conferences.

Thus the requirement that the projects participate in regular NDN activities in addition to the special Title I dissemination strategy created a demand on their time and resources which in some cases went beyond their capacity to meet it.

Demands created by special contractual requirements some projects had

As described in Chapter 1, the eight PIP Disseminator projects -- as their name implies -- were funded for dissemination with the specific requirement that the Project Information Package materials be the primary focus of their efforts.

For several reasons -- including the fact that often the individuals hired by the project sites to disseminate the projects were not the individuals to whom the intent of the PIP Disseminator effort had originally been explained -- there was from the very beginning of the Title I dissemination effort a good deal of confusion both about whether or not the use of the PIP was <u>really</u> a requirement, and precisely how the materials should be used by the project or by an adopter.

Just as they looked to USOE for guidance regarding the definition of an adoption, the projects also looked to USOE for clarification on the use of PIP materials in the dissemination process. Also, as with the adoption definition question, the responses in some cases served to create conflicting *"demands."*

Conflicting demands about achieving adoptions

There were four sets of conflicting demands confronting the projects having to do with the intent and the process for achieving adoptions.

At the most general level the projects experienced a conflict between focusing their efforts on generating adoptions in quantity v. generating high quality adoptions without regard to numbers. USOE's definition of an

adoption states that all key components of the exemplary project must be replicated in the new site in order for an adoption to have occurred. In order to insure such complete replication, many projects felt that they ought to limit the number of sites that they worked with. On the other hand, however, the 21 projects had a goal of 300 adoptions to achieve as a group. An even division of labor still meant each project accounting for 14-15 adoptions, a hefty work load even for experienced projects when one considers that most projects had less than full time staff assigned to dissemination, and when one does the simple arithmetic to calculate the number of person days involved in providing even minimal support (2-4 days training, 1-3 days follow-up, periodic communication, some time for evaluation) to each adopter site.

The second conflicting demand involved achieving adoptions in which all key components were replicated by an adopter (USOE policy) v. achieving adoptions in Title I schools and districts (the intent of the Title I dissemination strategy). It came as something of a surprise to the projects and to the regional conference participants to discover that on the face of it the exemplary Title I projects described in the presentations did not look or sound much different from what the participants were already doing in their own local Title I projects. Since, as was noted earlier, there are Federal guidelines that prescribe the general purpose and structure of a Title I project, and since there are certain instructional approaches that are commonly used with children in need of remedial instruction, this perceived similarity between what was exemplary practice and what was local practice was, to a certain extent real. The fact that the outcomes achieved by the exemplary projects is what makes them exemplary did not seem likely to prompt adopters to implement somebody else's version of what they already do. Local projects did, however, express interest in certain pieces of the exemplary projects. For example most of all of the exemplary Title I projects had well-functioning Parent Advisory Councils and effective strategies for involving parents in their programs. Many participants at the regional conferences, therefore, expressed interest in *"adopting"* a project's parent involvement component. Others wanted to implement only the effective management strategies some projects had developed.

Thus, on the one hand the projects felt a demand to provide their clients (potential adopters) with those program components or features that appeared to be most needed and least likely to duplicate what they already did. On the other hand, they were required to insure the adoption of all key project components. As with the issue of quantity v. quality, it is fair to say that the projects were expected to achieve the intent behind both sets of conflicting demands. It was not an either/or situation.

A third conflict centered around the question of whether projects ought to be disseminating the project as it existed at the time of JDRP approval (which in some cases was three or four years before they received dissemination funding) or whether they should describe and disseminate the project as it currently operated in their own schools. Practically speaking it was a lot simpler (and more logical) for the projects to describe their program as it currently existed, as opposed to the way it was at some point in the past. In most cases, this is what they did. Nevertheless, at several points along the way the question of what components or pieces of a project had been validated and what had not been validated was raised. For projects new to dissemination (and for dissemination staff new to the projects) it was not always a simple matter to discern which was which, much less describe that to audiences at awareness conferences.

Even in cases where project personnel knew and could describe ways in which the current project differed from what had been reviewed and approved by JDRP, there were some concerns that to disseminate the *"old"* version would be to offer adopters an inferior project.

A fourth conflict was experienced by some of the OPBE-funded PIP Disseminators, who felt that the PIP materials did not adequately or accurately reflect the nature of their project. Since they were expected to help adopters implement their projects by using the PIP materials it was important for them to sort out whether the project they were disseminating was the project they operated or the project that the PIP materials described.

The most extreme example of the problems created by these conflicting demands about what to offer to adopters was one project which, according to

the dissemination coordinator existed in three different versions: the project as JDRP-approved, the project as described in the PIP materials, and the project as it currently operated. The dissemination coordinator felt that each version was sufficiently different from the others that in order to proceed, the project needed a firm answer concerning which of the conflicting requirements to address in disseminating the program.

WHAT WERE THE NEED AREAS OR PROBLEMS FOR WHICH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WAS PROVIDED?

Based on an analysis of the data sources described in Chapter 3, the study identified five clusters or categories of needs for which projects were provided technical assistance. The five categories are:

- Needs for support
- Needs for orientation
- Needs for help with specific dissemination tasks
- Needs for help with management tasks or concerns
- Needs for information and assistance about relating with others involved in national dissemination

Each will be described in turn.

Needs for support

Two distinct kinds of support needs were identified: the need for logistical support and the need for moral support. Examples of logistical support include projects requesting information from the Support System staff concerning the date and place of upcoming meetings; or requesting assistance to determine whether a particular question should be addressed to a project officer or a contract officer.

Examples of the need for moral support are harder to pinpoint. Certainly the press of confusing and conflicting demands upon largely inexperienced projects in any context would, it stands to reason, be ameliorated by the extending of reassurance and encouragement. Comments made by

the projects in the course of study interviews confirms that moral support was valued:

> *"The moral support we've received has been grand, especially at the outset. We were overwhelmed. We never sought being involved in dissemination...we came kicking and screaming so it was all brand new to us. The reassurance was most helpful."*

> *"I feel, we (the D/Ds) are in a sharing situation, and not in an 'under the gun' atmosphere. The Support System helps bring us together. It would be a competitive atmosphere if not for the way they've supported us. I don't want others to fail -- we all want each other to do well. There is enough pie to go around. They've helped create a sharing of ideas and experiences which sets the tone to relax, be non-competitive. It's allowed us to thrive."*

> *"There was regular telephone contact...checking in from time to time so we knew we were not alone but we did not get badgered either."*

From a review of the Support System contact reports it appears that much of the moral support extended by the technical assistance agency involved confirming the projects' perceptions that they were operating in conditions where demands were conflicting and procedures were not always well defined. The Project Director noted:

> *"Sometimes it would be so nice to be able to give a straight and simple answer -- 'USOE expects you to do thus and so and here's how to do it.' Still, it seems to help them a lot to have me say 'Your perception is accurate. The policy or the guidelines are not clear, and in some places where the policy is clear the procedural implications aren't. Still, in all you have to do the best you can and we'll help you in any way we can.'"*

Needs for orientation

That the projects needed assistance in becoming oriented to the world of NDN dissemination was a function of their newness to the enterprise and the rapidity with which they became immersed in it. As described in the previous discussion of the demands imposed by the Title I strategy there were several different bodies of knowledge with which the newest projects

had little or no familiarity: the role of the State Facilitator vis-a-vis the adopter, and vis-a-vis the D/D; the general purpose and modus operandi of the NDN; USOE policies and expectations concerning dissemination; the role and significance of various individuals involved in the effort. Other kinds of information and procedures were unfamiliar even to more experienced projects: the nature of varying State Title I guidelines; the role of the State Title I Coordinators in working with the State Facilitator and the D/D to facilitate an adoption.

For new projects there was another kind of orientation that appears to have been needed. It is implicit in the kinds of information they needed to be made aware of, but it is more subtle than the simple provision of missing facts. Helping projects recognize and understand the norms and behaviors related to the role of a D/D in the NDN was the focus of a good deal of the orientation assistance provided to the projects.

Needs for help with specific dissemination tasks

The data indicates that the projects needed help with every aspect of the tasks they were expected to perform in the process of disseminating their programs. To define this need area more precisely we have broken out five sub-categories within which needs occurred.

Clarifying what was being disseminated

The nature of the requirement(s) impinging upon the projects with regard to specifying what exactly they were offering to adopters has been discussed above. As noted, this need often occurred as a by-product of the need to describe the project in awareness materials or presentations, or the need to sort out and reconcile the conflicting USOE demands which the projects perceived (disseminate JDRP-approved project v. disseminate all key components, etc.).

Creating awareness

The projects experienced a variety of different needs associated with their responsibilities to create awareness of their programs. Some specific

examples of requests for assistance with awareness materials and activities were:

- request for assistance in preparing a script for a 2-minute presentation
- request for assistance in locating media specialists to produce an audio tape for a slide presentation
- request for a field review of a slide tape for possible subtle social biases
- request for review and critique of awareness presentation
- request for assistance in designing and preparing overhead transparencies
- request for assistance in determining criteria for accepting or refusing invitations to present at awareness conferences

Securing adoptions

This sub-category was further divided into needs related to carrying out the major activities which, in aggregation, contribute to securing adoptions:

- clarifying the criteria for adoption
- assessing the match between an adopter's needs and the D/D project
- following up on expressions of interest
- negotiating adoption agreements

Some examples of technical assistance which projects requested related to securing adoptions are: copies of sample adoption agreements used by other projects; review of a draft adoption agreement; consultation on the development of criteria for selecting adopters.

A sample of actual D/D questions taken from the Support System files should be illustrative of the kinds of concerns projects expressed about securing adoptions:

> *"How can we wake up some potential adopters who seemed interested at first but now appear to have gone to sleep?"*
>
> *"How can I help potential adopters round up the funds they need to support the adoption, especially when their commitment to adopt seems to depend on it?"*

"What are some simple, reliable ways to assess adopter needs prior to training?"

"I need help on how others succeed in gaining firm commitment from adopters."

"Our biggest problem right now is how to get initial inquirers from the interest stage to seriously consider adoption. We have a lot of people who have expressed some interest in our project. But we're having trouble turning the interest into adoptions."

Providing training

Projects expressed a variety of needs related to training adopters. They needed help in sorting out logistical arrangements and learning how to negotiate costs with Facilitators and adopter sites. Designing the training program was another area within which projects sought help on tasks such as determining the design of the training event; selecting and sequencing topics; preparing training materials.

Evaluation of adoptions

As with needs related to Assisting Implementation, projects' needs in the area of evaluating adoptions were just beginning to be articulated as the data collection phase of the study was coming to a close. Two specific needs expressed in this area indicated a need for clarification of the D/D's responsibility to evaluate student achievement in adopting sites, and a need for technical information about ways to design the evaluation of *"adopted"* programs (as opposed to indigenously developed programs).

Needs for help with management tasks or concerns

Above and beyond the tasks associated with accomplishing the D/D project's objective -- dissemination -- the projects also had needs associated with *"managing"* the operation of the project. Eight specific aspects of program management yielded problems or concerns for which assistance was sought. These included:

Planning for dissemination

Most projects seemed to recognize the desirability of planning the dissemination activities they wanted to carry out but several questions and problems caused them to seek assistance. As one dissemination coordinator noted:

> *"Lack of experience makes it hard to predict how the whole process will work. Unless you've had experience it is difficult to anticipate with confidence that it will work for you like the others."*

Examples of other planning-related questions and concerns posed by projects were:

> *"How should I plan awareness strategies for Year 2 in the absence of the regional conferences?"*
>
> *"What would be a good balance in activity for next year between outreach and technical assistance? How can I predict what the demands will be?"*

One 40% time dissemination coordinator described her planning needs this way:

> *"Managing my time is my main concern. I feel that I have created a monster and I lack the skill to handle it. I'm having a great deal of difficulty delegating authority. My travel demands are unmanageable: my time in the office is so limited and the time I am in, I spend catching up on what I should have done while I was away. I have no time to plan what I should do tomorrow."*

Involving other project staff in dissemination

A number of dissemination coordinators sought assistance in developing plans and procedures for bringing other district staff into the dissemination activity. In some instances the need to do this emerged because the dissemination coordinator perceived that other staff were more knowledgeable about the project and therefore better able to provide some dissemination services such as training or follow-up assistance. In other cases, the need seemed to indicate that accomplishing all of the tasks required to disseminate the program was more than one

person could handle -- especially in cases where there was less than a full-time equivalent position assigned to dissemination.

Examples of questions indicating needs in this area include:

> *"I need assistance to figure out how to free classroom teachers from regular responsibilities in order to conduct training without disrupting classroom instruction."*
>
> *"What arrangements can our project work out to pay and hire regular project teachers to help train adopters?"*

Developing local support for the dissemination effort

A management need related to securing additional person-power for the dissemination effort is that of securing or maintaining the support of the district that houses the D/D project for its continued national dissemination. Finding itself in the position of providing services to schools all across the country is a role that most school districts do not often play. When they do find themselves in that situation, as in the case of NDN D/Ds, it appears in some cases that they are not able to predict the extent to which taking on that role may affect the other, more common business of the district. Thus projects that had submitted a proposal with a 20% or 30% time position allotted for accomplishing the D/D tasks soon found that the awareness conferences alone could use up that amount of time -- before a single adoption agreement had been signed. Under these circumstances, the person with responsibility for carrying out the D/D contract may begin looking within the district for ways to use other staff to get the job done.

If the district is unaware that the D/D effort needs (and deserves) more staff time -- or worse, if the district administration had concluded that the dissemination effort is already taking more time than it's worth -- the person charged with carrying out the D/D contract can have a very rough time indeed.

In some instances the needs that projects raised in asking for assistance were *"preventive medicine:" "How can I describe to my superintendent why this dissemination is worth our district's effort when it keeps me gone all the time?"*

In other instances, the problems had already presented themselves and assistance was sought to solve them -- as in the case of one project whose superintendent had misunderstood the nature of the contract and was giving the dissemination coordinator assignments that conflicted with the tasks the coordinator understood (from contact with USOE personnel) he was supposed to be engaged in. Thus, there were a number of different concerns that reflected a need for the projects to be able to develop or maintain the support of the home district for the dissemination activity.

Five other areas of concern were identified relating to management. They included:

- Documenting project dissemination activities
- Formative evaluation of dissemination acitivities
- Acquiring resources (financial and material)
- Producing reports for the funding agency
- Public relations

Needs for information and assistance about relating with others involved in national dissemination

Two kinds of project concerns identified by the study have been categorized as needs for assistance and information about relating to others involved in national dissemination:

- Project concerns which reflected a need or desire for communication and interaction with other D/D projects
- Project concerns which reflected a need for assistance in clarifying roles and relationships among persons and agencies involved in dissemination

SUMMARY

In looking at the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy to determine what it required of the 21 projects we identified a number of factors and conditions inherent in the strategy that translated into demands confronted (or problems to be solved) by the projects. The demands identified were:

- The requirement for fast start up by the projects, including most notably the preparation of awareness materials and presentations.
- The requirement to define what they were disseminating and what would constitute an adoption of their project.
- The necessity to understand and be able to explain the operation of the NDN and the various actors within it.
- The requirement to interact with a large number of adopters who had neither been screened nor linked to the D/D by the NDN State Facilitator.
- The necessity to understand the relationship between Federal and State Title I guidelines and the legal issues related to them.
- The necessity to become familiar with many different individuals from multiple Federal, state, and private agencies who played a significant role in the strategy.
- The necessity to adjust to the pace and schedule of travel and time away from home which the strategy imposed.
- The requirement to take part in regular National Diffusion Network activities above and beyond their participation in the Title I dissemination strategy, including involvement in state level awareness conferences that often duplicated their regional conference efforts.
- PIP Disseminators had a special contractual requirement that they use the PIP materials in their dissemination efforts, though many of the projects were unfamiliar and/or dissatisfied with the materials.
- Four sets of conflicting demands were felt by some or all of the projects concerning what they were required to disseminate and how. These conflicts were:

  quantity of adoptions v. quality of adoptions

  whole project adoptions v. adoption of components

  adoption of currently operating project v. previous project version approved by the JDRP

  adoption of PIP-described project v. actual project

A review of needs assessment surveys completed by the project and an examination of the reports describing each technical assistance transaction identified five categories of needs for which the 21 projects were provided technical assistance. The five categories were described and examples of specific problems and needs raised by projects were provided. Two particular categories of needs: needs for support and needs for orientation appeared

to be closely tied to the demands which the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy placed upon the projects.

The next section of this chapter looks at the nature and number of services the Title I Support System provided in response to these needs.

PART II

QUESTION 2: WHAT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES WERE PROVIDED TO MEET THE PROJECTS' NEEDS?

INTRODUCTION

To answer Question 2 we examined both the mode and content of technical assistance services provided by the Support System. Modes of assistance were identified by reviewing the technical assistance logs, contact reports and correspondence prepared by the Support System staff. Because The NETWORK provided technical assistance to some of the projects in October, 1977 prior to the formal start of the Support System contract, the period of analysis for their identification and tally of service modes extended from October 1977 - November 1978. Several different modes of service were identified and grouped in two categories: individually-administered technical assistance and group-administered technical assistance.

To explore the content of technical assistance provided we analyzed documentation for individually-administered assistance during the period October 1977 - May 1978. Content analysis was limited by type of transaction and period of transaction for two reasons. First, only individually-administered services were documented by Support System staff in narrative reports amenable to content analysis and frequency count. (Group-administered transactions were briefly summarized in the project documentation rather than described and analyzed.) Second, the analysis period for looking at technical assistance content was limited to eight months because of the great quantity and length of the qualitative material to be analyzed.

This section includes a brief description of the modes of technical assistance provided and presents the results of the frequency counts and content analysis performed. Readers desiring more detailed information concerning the nature of the technical assistance

provided by the Support System are referred to in the description of the technical assistance approach in Chapter 2 of this report.

WHAT MODES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES WERE PROVIDED?

As described in Chapter 2, the Title I Support System offered technical assistance in a number of forms to the projects it served. The forms or modes of service may be categorized as either individually-administered -- provided to a single client project, or group-administered -- provided simultaneously to two more client projects.

Modes of Individually-administered Technical Assistance

Five modes of individually-administered technical assistance were provided to Support System clients:

- in-person consultation at the client's site
- in-person consultation not at the client's site
- telephone consultation
- arranging consultant assistance for materials development
- responding to requests for information

The Support System provided two modes of in-person assistance: consultation at the client's site and one-to-one consultative meetings at either a Title I regional awareness conference, an NDN conference, or a technical assistance workshop. Between October 1977 and November 1978 sixteen on-site visits were provided to eleven projects. Seven visits occurred in October 1977 following the Orientation Workshop; the other nine visits took place during the year-long contract period. Visits ranged in duration from one day to three days (excluding travel time, which usually consumed one to

two days), and averaged one and one-half days of actual on-site time.

Forty-seven individual consultative meetings at a location other than the client site were provided by Support System staff to twenty projects. These meetings, typically planned and scheduled ahead of time, ranged from one to three hours in length.

Three modes of long distance assistance were provided: telephone consultation, brokerage of materials development services, and provision of information and resources in response to specific project requests.

Telephone consultation was the most frequently used mode of long distance assistance. Forty-four instances of consultation by phone were provided to seventeen projects. These consulting conversations were typically pre-planned and scheduled and ranged in duration from one to three hours. In some instances assistance was provided through a series of one-two hour phone discussions occurring over a period of several days. In addition to the forty-four phone consultations, the Support System initiated or received over one hundred telephone calls which involved substantive discussion or provision of information. However, because these phone calls were not specifically described as consultation in the contact reports and because they tended to be less than an hour in duration, these transactions have been classified simply as telephone contacts.

The Support System arranged and managed long distance expert assistance to develop dissemination materials for five of the projects. In these cases media specialists, artists, and writers located in Massachusetts were hired by the Support System to develop materials for the client projects located elsewhere in the United States. This mode of service was used primarily during the few weeks prior to the beginning of the regional awareness conferences in November 1977.

The third mode of long distance assistance, locating resources and information upon request was provided to fourteen projects who made a total of twenty-three such requests. Several letters were also sent to and received from clients by Support System staff; however, correspondence has not been separately tallied as a mode of assistance since most letters were following up telephone calls, related to information requests, or arranging consultations.

Modes of Group-administered Technical Assistance

The Title I Support System provided group-administered technical assistance to its clients in three ways: workshops and meetings were organized and run; resource packages were prepared and distributed; and news and information updates were compiled and shared on a regular basis.

Support System clients were provided both multi-day workshops (2-3 days) and individual workshop sessions (one-half day or less). The shorter sessions were incorporated as part of other events (e.g., NDN-wide conferences) while the 2-3 day meetings were free standing events sponsored specifically for the 21 projects. In all, three major workshops were provided during the contract period, one of which (the September, 1977 Orientation Workshop) was co-sponsored with the three other technical assistance/conference contractors. Twelve shorter workshop sessions were provided during the contract period.

Fifteen resource packages were prepared and distributed to the projects. Nine of these were prepared in conjunction with workshops or workshop sessions. Projects unable to attend workshops received the related resource packages in the mail. Five other resource packages were compiled and mailed to all projects; a special set of materials having to do with PIP revision was prepared for each of the PIP disseminators. Unlike the provision of materials in response to individual project requests, the preparation of each

resource package was initiated by the Support System to address information needs perceived by the technical assistance staff to be common to most or all of the 21 projects.

Two Support System activities were designed to provide the 21 projects with news and information updates related to their dissemination efforts. Each month from January 1977 - November 1978, the Support System prepared an article for insertion in the NDN newsletter produced by Far West Laboratory. In addition, the Support System MEMO, an informal newsletter featuring news from and about the 21 projects, was regularly prepared and mailed to the clients. Nine MEMOS were distributed during the contract period. A special feature of the MEMO was a mail-back sheet called the newsgram. Clients used newsgrams to submit news, questions, and ideas to the MEMO for consideration and response by their peers.

Table 1 summarizes the modes of technical assistance services provided during October 1977 - November 1978 by the Title I Support System.

TABLE 1

Summary: Modes of technical assistance provided by the Title I Support System

October 1977 - November 1978

	Total number of transactions	Number of projects involved
Individually administered assistance		
in-person on-client site	16	11
in-person off-client site	47	20
telephone consultation	44	17
brokered materials development	6	5
information/resources on request	23	14
TOTAL	136	
Group administered assistance		
workshops (2 or more days)	3	15, 11, 13
workshops (one-half day or less)	12	21
resource packages	15	21
news bulletins		
NDN newsletter insert	9	21
Support System MEMO	9	21
TOTAL	48	

WHAT NEED AREAS WERE ADDRESSED?

To determine the extent to which individually-administered technical assistance addressed each of the need areas described in Part 1 of this Chapter, we examined all correspondence between Support System staff, consultants, and clients, and all contact reports authored by technical assistance staff and consultants. Frequency counts for each category and sub-category of need area addressed between October 1977 and May 1978 were made. (The exception is the need category *"moral support"* since it does not constitute content and was typically not recorded in the project documentation.) Because several different items were often covered during a single transaction, the total number of specific content transactions counted (813) is larger than the total number of individual transactions recorded (136). Table 2 displays the frequency with which a total of fifteen need areas were addressed.

TABLE 2

Summary: Content of individually-administered technical assistance services provided by the Title I Support System

October 1977 - November 1978

Need area addressed	Number of times need area was addressed across all transactions
Creating awareness (Task)	205
Securing adoptions (Task)	127
Providing training (Task)	92
Relating with others in dissemination	58
Logistical support	56
Planning for dissemination (Management)	51
Orientation	42
Acquiring resources (Management)	40
Providing implementation assistance	31
Documenting dissemination activities (Management)	30
Involving staff in dissemination (Management)	28
Evaluating adoptions	23
Developing local support (Management)	19
Reporting to funding agency (Management)	9
Public relations (Management)	2
TOTAL	813 Content Transactions

The need area most frequently addressed involved the task of creating awareness. Slightly more than a quarter of all content transactions counted (205 of 813) involved working with projects on materials, strategies, and problems associated with creating awareness. Securing adoptions and providing training were the second and third most frequently addressed needs during the October 1977 - May 1978 period examined.

Needs related to getting oriented, developing working relationships with others in dissemination, and sorting out logistics of operation also received major attention in the technical assistance transactions.

Of the five dissemination task-related need areas addressed, two received relatively little attention during the period we examined: providing implementation assistance to adopters and evaluating adoptions. Similarly many management-related needs appear at the lower end of the frequency scale during the October-May period.

OBSERVATIONS

1. In-person modes of assistance that piggy-back on other events (consulting with projects during NDN conferences) reached more projects than in-person mode requiring special arrangement (on-site visits.)

2. Technical assistance modes dependent entirely on Support System initiation such as the provision of resource packages or the distribution of the news bulletin reached all 21 cients.

3. Just over half of the projects received on-site visits.

4. The Support System provided 136 individually-administered services and 48 group administered services over the course of 13

months. On an average each month 10 projects received individual assistance and all 21 projects received 3 instances of group administered assistance from the Support System.

5. The technical assistance workshops provided fifteen opportunities in thirteen months for the 21 projects to work together as a group.

6. The ordering of the need areas addressed shows a clear relationship to the tasks and concerns of immediate importance to the clients during the period under examination. That is, the projects were involved in initiating a new dissemination strategy with a major awareness component and an explicit goal of securing 300 adoptions. The low level of technical assistance provided for management tasks and tasks that occur late in the adoption cycle (i.e. assisting implementation and evaluation,) further suggest that content of the assistance provided was determined by the activities and pressures immediately concerning the clients. (The relationship of the dissemination time cycle to assistance provided is analyzed and discussed further in Question 4.)

SUMMARY

Eight different types or modes of technical assistance services were provided to the 21 D/D projects served by the Title I Support System. Five modes involved assistance that was individually administered to client projects in response to specific needs; three modes involved group administered assistance for needs common to some or all projects. Whereas individually-administered assistance tended to be provided in response to client requests, group-administered assistance was offered at the initiation of the Support System in response to perceived client needs and concerns.

During the period October 1977 to November 1978 a total of 136 individually-administered technical assistance transactions and 48 group administered transactions were counted. In-person consultation was the most frequently used form of individual, long-distance assistance provided.

A total of fifteen workshops or workshop sessions were provided to the 21 projects. Two other forms of group-administered assistance were resource packages and news bulletins compiled and distributed to all 21 projects.

An examination of the content of all individually-administered technical assistance services during October 1977 and May 1978 identified 813 content transactions in fifteen need areas. The majority of these transactions focused on needs related to creating awareness, searching adoptions, providing training, developing relationships with others in dissemination, and sorting out logistics and orientation concerns.

Task areas related to evaluation and implementation and management concerns such as reporting to the funding agency, or developing ways to involve other staff in dissemination received relatively little attention during the October-May period.

PART III

QUESTION 3: WHAT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 21 PROJECTS APPEAR RELATED TO VARIATIONS IN THE PROVISION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE?

INTRODUCTION

At the outset of the study we hypothesized that the 21 projects would receive neither equal amounts nor identical kinds of technical assistance from the Title I Support System. To determine the extent to which the projects showed variation in the overall amount, type, and content of assistance received we identified seven comparative characteristics or dimensions along which the projects differed and upon which patterns of quantitative variation might emerge. This quantitative analysis was supplemented with observations from the Support System Project Director concerning affective and cognitive characteristics of the clients she believed to be related to their varying use of technical assistance. Thus, the response to Study Question 3 is presented in four parts, each of which is addressed a sub-question:

- What project characteristics appear related to variations in the overall amount of technical assistance received?
- What characteristics appear related to variations in the modes of service provided?
- What characteristics appear related to variations in the content of service provided?
- What additional project characteristics did the technical assistance staff observe to be of significance with regard to variations in technical assistance provided?

Characteristics along which the 21 projects were grouped for quantitative comparison

As noted above, we identified seven characteristics or dimensions

along which the projects differed, and upon which we expected that some patterns in technical assistance variation might occur. Before turning to a discussion of the analysis, each of the seven characteristics will be described and a Table arraying the projects along the seven characteristics will be presented.

Experience of the project's dissemination coordinator

We hypothesized that more experienced disseminators would need and use less technical assistance than unexperienced disseminators. Based upon interviews with each dissemination coordinator and on the date that person was first listed in the USOE catalog (Educational Programs that Work, EPTW) as the project's contact person, each project was classified as having either a novice or a veteran dissemination coordinator.

Time commitment of the dissemination coordinator

We suspected that a project's use of technical assistance might be related to the amount of time the disseminator had available for dissemination tasks: projects with full-time coordinators would have more time to spend (and perhaps more vested interest) in carrying out dissemination activities; part-time coordinators have less time and, therefore, might have less motivation or opportunity to use technical assistance. Based upon interviews with each project, we categorized the 21 D/Ds according to whether each had a full time (or full time equivalent) dissemination coordinator or a part time dissemination coordinator.

Source of dissemination funds

Source of funding not only influenced the amount of money projects had (OPBE-funded projects averaged about $50,000; NDN-funded projects averaged slightly less than that.) It also influenced the project's contractually obligated scope of work. OPBE-funded projects had some very specific task requirements that other projects did not have spelled

out in their contracts; non-funded projects lacking contracts also lacked specificity of requirements. We wondered whether the requirements placed by the funding source might influence variations in the use of technical assistance.

The projects were categorized according to whether they were funded through the Division of Education Replication as NDN D/Ds, through the Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation (OPBE) as PIP Disseminators, or operating without federal funds specifically earmarked for national dissemination (non-funded.)

Program type

Even though all 21 projects were nominally considered to be *"Title I projects"* they varied considerably along a dimension that might be called program type. Of all the possible ways to define program type (e.g., instructional approach, grade level, source of development funds, etc.) we settled upon a definition that seemed most clearly related to the dissemination activities of the projects. That is, most of the 21 projects had a significant descriptor for the nature of the project being disseminated. We have used the following four descriptions to categorize the projects by program type:

1. PIP-1 Projects that had been packaged in the initial exemplary project packaging experiment carried out by RMC Research Corporation under contract to OPBE. These projects were commonly known as *"first wave PIPs."*
2. PIP-2 Projects that had been packaged in a second round of the OPBE-funded packaging effort by CEMREL, Inc. These projects known as *"second wave PIPs"* differed from the PIP-1 projects in that they had never been field-tested by adopters.
3. Migrant Projects in this category were developed to serve the children of regularly migrating families. These projects tend to be extremely complex and are usually implemented at the

SEA level rather than at the local school or district level, as is the case with most NDN projects.

4. Other These projects included primarily Title I-developed (and one Title III-developed) projects that were submitted to the JDRP by the Title I office.

Duration of project experience in national dissemination

There seemed to be at least two ways to gauge *"experience"* with regard to dissemination: that of the project personnel (i.e. were they veterans or novices); and that of the project: how long had the project had national exposure through dissemination?

To explore the relationship of project experience in dissemination to technical assistance use we categorized the projects according to the date of entry in the USOE catalog (Educational Programs that Work, EPTW.) To equalize the time interval across groupings we used Volume I (Fall, 1975), Volume II (Fall, 1976), and Volume IV (Fall, 1977.)

Level of funding

We hypothesized that projects with little or no money for dissemination might use more technical assistance than projects with funding at the upper levels of the scale. Looking at the amounts of dissemination funding the projects received we identified three distinct funding levels: those operating at $50,000 or above), those operating at $38,000 or below and those operating with no money for dissemination.

Distance from The NETWORK

Finally, we suspected that a project's distance from the technical assistance source might influence the amount of assistance requested or received. However, rather than categorize projects according to their distance from The NETWORK, we used a phenomenological measure of

distance -- time zone. Projects in The NETWORK's time zone (EST) were classified as in the same time zone; projects operating on Central or Western time were classified as out of The NETWORK's time zone.

Table 3 on the next page arrays the 21 projects along these seven dimensions. Note that the Table also indicates a short title for each project. These short titles are used throughout the Tables included in Question 3.

Analysis of comparative project characteristics related to variations in amount and type of technical assistance provided

To determine whether any of the identified comparative project characteristics had any bearing on the overall amount or type of technical assistance provided, we compiled information on the frequency and types of technical assistance exchanges that occurred. From a review of Support System technical assistance logs a tally was made of the number of times each project received on-site assistance, in-person off-site consultation, telephone consultation, brokered materials development assistance, or substantive information in response to a specific request. In addition note was made of the number of multi-day technical assistance workshops each project attended. Next, a coding scheme was developed and each transaction was assigned a numerical type and frequency *"score"* for each project's use of different types of assistance and for overall amount of assistance received. The technical assistance transaction type and frequency coding scheme is outlined, with an example, on page 87.

Assigning such scores for the technical assistance provided each project made it possible to group Support System clients with similar scores for amount and types of assistance received in order to determine whether any patterns related to the comparative project characteristics emerged. Table 5 on page 88 displays the number of technical assistance services each project received in five categories, indicates which workshop

A Comparison of the 21 D/D Projects Along Seven Dimensions

PROJECTS	SHORT TITLE FOR REFERENCE	EXPERIENCE OF DISSEMINATION COORDINATOR	TIME COMMITMENT OF DISSEMINATION COORDINATOR	SOURCE OF DISSEMINATION FUNDS	PROGRAM TYPE	DATE ENTERED IN "EPTW" (1)	IN OR OUT OF NETWORK'S TIME ZONE	LEVEL OF (2) DISSEMINATION FUNDING
Project Catch-Up	Catch Up	Veteran	Part-time	NDN	PIP-1	1975	Out	1
Catch Up - Keep Up	CU-KU	Novice	Full-time	OPBE	PIP-2	1976	Out	2
Project CHILD	CHILD	Veteran	Part-time	Non-Funded	Migrant	1976	In	0
Conquest	Conquest	Veteran	Part-time	OPBE	PIP-1	1975	Out	2
Discovery Through Reading	Discovery	Veteran	Full-time	NDN	PIP-2	1976	In	1
Early Prevention of School Failure	EPSF	Veteran	Full-time	NDN	Other	1975	Out	2
Flagstaff Remedial Reading Project	Flagstaff	Novice	Full-time	OPBE	PIP-2	1976	Out	2
Florida Migratory Compensatory Program	Florida	Novice	Part-time	Non-Funded	Migrant	1976	In	0
High Intensity Tutoring (HIT)	HIT	Novice	Part-time	OPBE	PIP-1	1975	In	2
HOSTS	HOSTS	Veteran	Full-time	NDN	Other	1975	Out	2
Improvement of Basic Reading Skills	IBRS	Novice	Full-time	OPBE	PIP-2	1976	Out	2
Intensive Reading Instructional Teams	IRIT	Novice	Full-time	OPBE	PIP-1	1975	In	2
Project NOMAD	NOMAD	Veteran	Part-time	Non-Funded	Migrant	1976	In	0
Pre-Kindergarten for the Disadvantaged (Predict I)	Predict	Novice	Part-time	NDN	Other	1977	Out	1
Programmed Tutorial Reading	PTR	Novice	Part-time	OPBE	PIP-1	1975	Out	2
Reading/English Rotation Project	RER	Novice	Part-time	NDN	Other	1977 (3)	In	1
Project Reading Improvement	PRI	Novice	Part-time	NDN	PIP-2	1976	In	1
Project Seaport	Seaport	Novice	Part-time	OPBE	PIP-2	1976	In	2
Secondary Credit Exchange Program	Sec.Credit	Veteran	Part-time	Non-Funded	Migrant	1977	Out	0
Title I Reading Center	Title I RC	Veteran	Part-time	NDN	Other	1976	In	1
Training Migrant Paraprofessionals (Individualized Bilingual Instruction)	IBI	Novice	Part-time	NDN	Migrant	1976	Out	1

Notes: (1) "EPTW" - Educational Programs That Work, USOE's catalog of JDRP-approved projects

(2) Funding level key: 0 = non-funded; 1 = $38,000 or below; 2 = $50,000 or above

(3) Although RER was listed in EPTW in 1976, description explicitly stated that no dissemination services were available.

each project attended and indicates the overall technical assistance transaction score for each project.

WHAT PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS APPEAR RELATED TO VARIATIONS IN THE OVERALL AMOUNT OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVED?

Variations in amount of assistance received according to funding level

As Table 4 shows, the overall technical assistance transaction scores the projects received ranged from a low score of 1 for HOSTS to a high score of 17 for CHILD with considerable variation in between. To determine which if any of the seven comparative characteristics appeared related to overall amount of assistance received, we first grouped the projects according to level of dissemination funding and examined the overall technical assistance scores of the projects in each group. The results are displayed below.

TABLE 4

Comparison of projects' dissemination funding levels with scores for overall amounts of technical assistance received

Funding level	50,000 and above		38,000 and below		Non-funded	
Projects and overall scores:	CU-KU	6	Catch Up	3	CHILD	17
	Conquest	3	Discovery	5	Florida	4
	EPSF	5	PREDICT	8	NOMAD	6
	Flagstaff	7	RER	9	Sec. Credit	8
	HIT	6	PRI	9		
	HOSTS	1	Title I RC	5		
	IBRS	10	IBI	8		
	IRIT	12				
	PTR	5				
	Seaport	13				
Range of Scores:	1-13		3-9		4-17	
Average Score:	6.8		6.7		8.75	

Technical Assistance Transaction Type and
Frequency Coding Scheme

Technical assistance transaction type	Index of frequency or duration	Score
On-site visit	3 days	3
	2 days	2
	1 day	1
	0	0
In-person off-site consultation	5+ instances	3
	3-4 "	2
	1-2 "	1
	0	0
Telephone consultation	5+ instances	3
	3-4 "	2
	1-2 "	1
	0	0
Brokered materials development assistance	over $400	3
	$300-$400	2
	$100-$300	1
	0	0
Response to information request	5+ responses	3
	3-4 "	2
	1-2 "	1
	0	0
Workshop attendance	3 workshops	3
	2 "	2
	1 "	1
	0	0

Example:	Project received 2 on-site visits, 2 days each	Score: 4
	" " 1 off-site consultation	1
	" " 2 telephone consultations	1
	" " brokered materials assistance costing $350	2
	" made no information requests	0
	" attended one workshop	1
	OVERALL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TRANSACTION SCORE WOULD BE	9

TABLE 5

Technical Assistance Services Provided
to Title I Support System Clients

PROJECT	NUMBER OF ON-SITE VISITS	NUMBER OF IN-PERSON OFF-SITE CONSULTATIONS	NUMBER OF TELEPHONE CONSULTATIONS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS	INSTANCES OF BROKERED MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE	ATTENDED ORIENTATION WORKSHOP 9/77	ATTENDED WORKSHOP 10/78	ATTENDED PIP WORKSHOP 2/78	TOTAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE "SCORE"
Catch Up		1		1				✓	3
CU-KU		2	4	3		✓	✓	✓	6
CHILD	4	5	1	1	1	✓	✓		17
Conquest			1			✓		✓	3
Discovery		1	1				✓	✓	5
EPSF	2	1				✓			5
Flagstaff		2	3	2		✓	✓	✓	7
Florida	1	2	2				✓		4
HIT		2	2	1		✓	✓	✓	6
HOSTS		1							1
IBRS		4	4	1		✓	✓	✓	10
IRIT	1	5	2	2	1	✓	✓	✓	12
NOMAD	1	3	3	2					6
PREDICT	1	2	3		1	✓			8
PTR		2	2			✓		✓	5
RER	1	1	4	3		✓	✓		9
PRI		3	4	2		✓	✓	✓	9
Seaport	1	3	5	2	2	✓	✓	✓	13
Sec. Credit	1	2	1	1	1	✓			8
Title I RC	1	3				✓	✓		5
IBI	2	2	2	1		✓	✓		8
(Total)	(16)	(47)	(44)	(23)	(6)				

Looking at the average overall scores for the three funding level groupings it appears at first glance as if the non-funded projects did, in fact use more technical assistance than the funded projects. However, the scores for the non-funded group are clearly skewed by the fact that Project CHILD used a great deal more technical assistance from any of the others in the group. If CHILD is removed from the group and the average overall score re-computed, it turns out that on the average, non-funded projects used somewhat less technical assistance overall than funded projects, the average score (without CHILD) being 6.0 as compared with 6.7 and 6.8 for the two groups of funded projects.

Interestingly there is scarcely any difference in average scores for overall amount of assistance used between projects funded at over $50,000 and those at the next funding level, below $38,000. However, if one looks at individual project's overall scores it appears that funding source (rather than funding amount) may be related to technical assistance. The projects with the second, third and fourth highest overall scores are OPBE-funded PIP Disseminators (Seaport, IRIT, and IBRS.) Since the OPBE work statements explicitly required that the PIP Disseminators budget for and participate in technical assistance activities, one conclusion that could be drawn from this finding is that projects are more likely to use technical assistance when there is a clearly communicated expectation from the contracting agency that they will do so.

Similarly, the fact that the Migrant projects did not have dissemination funds may have limited the extent to which they could participate in some technical assistance activities such as workshops (requiring travel expense.) Whether or not lack of money is a possible explanation for low overall scores for non-funded projects will be examined in more detail when we look at variations related to use of specific modes of assistance.

Variations in amount of assistance received according to six other comparative dimensions

To determine whether any of the remaining six comparative dimensions appeared related to the overall amount of assistance received we grouped the projects together in three score ranges: those receiving overall technical assistance transacion scores of 1-5, those receiving 6-10, and those receiving scores of 11 or more. We then calculated which percentage of projects in each score range grouping was included in each of the six comparative dimension groupings (i.e. experience of coordinator, etc.) The results are displayed in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6

Grouping of projects according to scores for overall amount of technical assistance received

Score Range:	1-5	6-10	11+
Projects:	Catch-Up Conquest Discovery EPSF Florida HOSTS PTR Title I RC	CU-KU Flagstaff HIT IBRS Sec. Credit NOMAD PREDICT RER IBI PRI	IRIT Seaport CHILD
	Of projects in the 1-5 range...	Of projects in the 6-10 range...	Of projects in the 11+ range...
	75% are veterans	80% are novices	67% are novices
	63% are part-time	70% are part-time	67% are part-time
	63% are NDN-funded	60% are OPBE-funded or non-funded	100% are OPBE-funded or non-funded
	63% are outside The NETWORK time zone	60% are outside The NETWORK time zone	100% are in The NETWORK time zone
	75% are PIP-1 or other	70% are PIP-2 or Migrant	33% each are PIP-1, PIP-2, or Migrant
	63% entered EPTW in 1975	90% entered EPTW in 1976 or 1977	67% entered EPTW in 1976

It appears that our assumption about the relationship between the experience of the dissemination coordinator and the amount of technical

assistance used holds: the majority of projects in both the middle and upper overall score ranges had novice coordinators whereas the majority of projects in the lowest overall score range had veteran coordinators. Similarly, looking at the date of project entry into national dissemination we see that the majority of projects receiving low overall scores were entered in EPIW in 1975 while the majority of projects in the mid and upper score ranges were entered either in 1976 or 1977.

Looking at the relationship between program type and overall amount of technical assistance we see a pattern that resembles overall usage by funding level. That is, PIP-2 projects (all OPBE-funded) and Migrant projects (largely non-funded) used more technical assistance than either PIP-1 projects or projects in the "other" category.

Perhaps the two most interesting findings have to do with time commitment of the dissemination coordinator and the project's time zone relationship to The NETWORK. Whether a project has a full-time or a part-time dissemination coordinator does not appear to be related to the overall amount of assistance used by the projects. In each score range grouping, the majority of projects had part time coordinators. Thus there is no clear evidence to suggest that full-time coordinators use more technical assistance than part-time coordinators as we had originally thought they might.

With regard to time zone the following trends appear. The majority of projects at the low end of the score range are outside of The NETWORK time zone. On the other hand, all of the projects at the upper end of the score range are inside The NETWORK's time zone. Interestingly, of the projects in the middle score range -- 60% or a slight majority are outside The NETWORK's time zone.

One possible explanation for the time zone relationship that the data suggests is that a project's distance from The NETWORK influences

the amount of assistance received only if the project is an experienced project with a veteran coordinator. That is, the majority of the projects at the low end of the scale are outside The NETWORK's time zone, and they are predominantly veteran projects. The projects in the middle score range, however, while predominantly outside The NETWORK time zone consist of 80% novice coordinators and 90% projects entered EPTW in 1976 or 1977. Thus it appears that projects that are experienced and far away from the technical assistance agency are less likely to use or receive assistance than are projects who are new and far away.

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS OF PROJECTS APPEAR RELATED TO VARIATIONS IN MODES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE USED?

Two kinds of variations related to mode of technical assistance service were examined. First we looked at variations in the number of different modes used by the projects; then we looked at varying use of four individual modes: on-site assistance, telephone consultations, workshop participation, and submission of Support System newsgrams. Tables displaying the findings for variation in modes used were constructed in the same way as those displaying variations in amount. Projects were grouped according to the score each received for use of the particular mode examined. In the case of number of modes used, we simply counted the number of different technical assistance modes each project had used and grouped projects accordingly. Then each mode grouping was examined in relationship to the comparative dimensions used above.

Variations in number of different technical assistance service modes used

As described in Question 2, the Support System offered projects technical assistance services in eight different forms: five individually administered modes including on-site visits, in-person off-site consultation, telephone consultation, brokered materials development assistance, and responses to information requests; and three group-

administered modes -- workshops and workshop sessions, resource packages and news bulletins. In tallying the number of different modes each project used we counted only those modes that required some initiative or active involvement on the project's part. Thus, in addition to the five individually-administered modes, we looked at whether or not a project had attended a workshop or workshop session and also at whether or not a project had submitted the newsgram portion of the Support System MEMO. The fact that projects had received Support System resource packages was not included in the mode count since all projects received resource packages. Thus projects were grouped according to whether they had used one, two, three, four, five, or all (i.e. seven) modes of technical assistance. Table 7 displays the results.

TABLE 7

Grouping of projects according to number of different technical assistance modes used

Number of modes used:	one mode	two modes	three modes	four modes	five modes	all modes
Projects:	HOSTS	Conquest	Catch Up Discovery HIT Title I RC EPSF	CU-KU Flagstaff Florida IBRS NOMAD PTR PRI	PREDICT RER IBI	CHILD IRIT Sec. Credit Seaport

Of the projects using 1-3 modes...

86% are veterans
57% are part-time
71% are NDN-funded
62.5% are outside NETWORK time zone
86% are PIP-1 or Other
72% entered in 1975
57% highest funding range

Of the projects using 4-all modes...

79% are veterans
71% are part-time
69% are OPBE-funded or non-funded
50% are in NETWORK time zone; 50% are outside of it
76% are PIP-2 or Migrant
79% entered in 1976 or 1977

As with the findings for overall amounts of assistance used, projects with novice dissemination coordinators and relatively recent entry into national dissemination used more different modes of technical assistance than experienced projects with veteran coordinators. And again, non-funded and OPBE-funded projects used more different modes than did NDN-funded projects.

The time zone factor once more presents an interesting finding. Projects using fewest number of modes tended to be outside The NETWORK's time zone. However, projects using the greatest number of modes were evenly divided: 50% were in The NETWORK time zone and 50% were outside it. The same pattern of interacting variables discussed in regard to overall amounts of assistance used is probably also operating here. That is, projects using fewest modes are heavily represented by veteran

projects outside The NETWORK time zone, while those using many different modes are predominantly novices, suggesting that distance from the technical assistance agency does not interfere with technical assistance usage in instances where the project feels the greatest needs for help as would likely be the case with projects and project personnel new to dissemination.

Variations in use of four technical assistance service modes

The findings for variations in use of four individual technical assistance modes are presented in Tables 8 through 11 below.

TABLE 8

Grouping of projects according to technical assistance transaction scores for on-site visits

Visit Score: 0	1-2	3-4
Catch-Up	Florida	EPSF
CU-KU	IRIT	IBI
Conquest	NOMAD	CHILD
Discovery	PREDICT	
Flagstaff	Seaport	
HIT	Title I RC	
HOSTS	RER	
IBRS	Sec. Credit	
PTR		
Of the projects that received no on-site visits...	**Of projects with scores of 1-2...**	**Of projects with scores of 3-4...**
55% are novices	63% are novices	67% are veterans
44% are part-time	88% are part-time	67% are part-time
55% are OPBE-funded	74% are NDN-funded	67% are NDN-funded
88% are PIP-1 or PIP-2	74% are migrant or other	100% are migrant or other
77% are outside The NETWORK's time zone	75% are in The NETWORK's time zone	67% are outside NETWORK's time zone
55% entered EPTW in 1975	80% entered EPTW in 1976 or 1977	67% entered EPTW in 1976
77% funded at highest level	75% are low or non-funded	67% are low or non-funded

As the Table shows, every project in the Migrant program type category received at least one on-site visit. This is the only program type category for which that is the case. The Table also shows that NDN-funded projects and those in the *other* program type category tended to use on-site assistance from the Support System more frequently than the OPBE funded projects. Since OPBE-funded projects received high scores for overall amounts of assistance used and for numbers of different modes used, this finding is an interesting one, most likely explained by the fact that on-site assistance was being provided to the OPBE funded projects by the other three technical assistance/conference contractors. In addition, one of the OPBE-funded projects had written 30 days of on-site consultation by one of the other contractors into its PIP Disseminator contract.

On-site assistance appears to have been used more frequently by veteran disseminators than by novices and was more often used by projects with no funding or low funding levels than by those with $50,000 or more in dissemination funds. As before, there are overlapping variables at work here: the OPBE-funded projects tended to have larger budgets than the NDN-funded projects and we see OPBE-funded projects using less on-site assistance. Also, the Migrant projects all used on-site assistance and they are heavily represented in the non-funded and low-funded project levels.

The majority of projects receiving on-site visits were in The NETWORK's time zone, although two of the three projects with the highest scores for on-site assistance were in different time zones.

Table 9

Grouping of projects according to technical assistance transaction scores for telephone consultation

Telephone Consultation Score:	0	1	2	3
Projects:	Catch Up HOSTS EPSF Title I RC	CHILD Conquest Discovery Florida HIT IRIT Sec. Credit PTR IBI	CU-KU Flagstaff NOMAD PREDICT	IBRS Seaport PRI

Of the projects with 0 scores..	Of the projects with scores of 2-3..
100% are veterans	88% are Novices
50% are part-time	63% are part-time
100% are NDN-funded	75% are OPBE-funded or non-funded
100% are Other or PIP-1	75% are PIP-2 or Migrant
75% are outside NETWORK time zone	50% are inside NETWORK time zone; 50% are out of it
75% entered in 1975	100% entered in 1976 or 1977
50% low funding level	50% low or non-funded

Variations in the use of telephone consultation repeat the same patterns that emerged in looking at overall amounts of assistance used and number of different modes used. Veteran, experienced projects, NDN-funded and predominantly outside The NETWORK time zone are heavily represented in the group that received no telephone consultation. By contrast, projects receiving large amounts of assistance over the telephone are predominantly novice, OPBE, or non-funded, PIP-2 or Migrant projects, entered in 1976 or 1977.

Telephone use is one technical assistance mode where the problem of differing time zones might be expected to have a negative impact. Looking at the projects that received the highest phone consultation scores, however, we see that once again they are evenly divided -- half in and half out of The NETWORK time zone. Neither amount of funding nor time commitment of the dissemination coordinator appear related to variations in the use of telephone consultation.

TABLE 10

Grouping of projects according to technical assistance transaction score for workshop participation

Workshop Participation Scores:	0	1	2	3
Projects:	HOSTS NOMAD	*Catch Up Florida Sec. Credit PREDICT EPSF	CHILD *Conquest *Discovery *PTR RER Title I RC IBI	*CU-KU *Flagstaff *HIT *IBRS *IRIT *Seaport *PRI

Of the projects receiving scores of 0-1...	Of the projects receiving scores of 2-3...
71% are veterans	71% are novices
71% are part-time	64% are part-time
57% are NDN-funded	93% are OPBE or NDN-funded
86% are Migrant or Other	71% are PIP-1 or PIP-2
85% entered in 1976 or 1977	57% entered in 1976
43% are non-funded	7 % were non-funded

Note: *indicate that one of the workshops attended was for PIP projects only. All 11 PIP projects attended this workshop; three of the 11 received invitational travel funds from USOE to insure their participation.

With regard to projects' participation in technical assistance workshops the data suggest that the level of experience of the dissemination coordinator but not the duration of national dissemination exposure of the project may be important in determing which projects take part. The majority of projects that received high scores for workshop participation had novice coordinators and programs entered in EPTW in 1976. Most projects receiving low scores for workshop participation were also entered in EPTW in 1976 or 1977, but had predominately veteran dissemination coordinators. It may be that in

addition to providing substantive help and information, workshops present an opportunity for peer interaction and relationship building that is more needed by individuals new to the role of disseminator than by those who've had experience and opportunities to form working relationships with others in the same role.

Funding level and program type also appear to be related to workshop participation. Of the projects receiving the lowest scores for this mode of assistance, nearly half are non-funded as compared with only 7% of the projects receiving high scores for workshop involvement. As noted earlier, it appears that lack of funds may have limited the participation of the non-funded migrant projects in technical assistance workshops.

As with the other modes examined, time commitment of the dissemination coordinator does not appear to have any bearing on whether or not projects participated in technical assistance workshops.

As noted on the Table, one of the three workshops the Support System provided was specifically for projects with PIP materials to disseminate. Because OPBE had explicitly required the eight projects it funded to participate in technical assistance activities, and because that office provided travel money so that the PIP projects funded by the NDN could also attend, the majority of projects receiving high scores for workshop participation are PIP-1 or PIP-2 projects.

We did not explore whether time zone had any bearing on workshop participation. Since each workshop was held in a different location around the country we reasoned that time zone logically ought not to have had an influence on participation.

The last technical assistance activity we looked at was the submission of newsgrams by the Support System clients. As previously described the newsgram was the mail-back portion of the Support System

newsletter which offered clients the opportunity to submit questions, problems, resources and news for publication in the MEMO and response by their peers. The newsgram was one of the specific networking strategies that the Support System provided for the clients and we wondered whether variations in projects' use of the newsgram might show any similarities to patterns of mode and amount of technical assistance used. We also assumed that projects who frequently used the newsgram probably had a stronger sense of identification with the Title I "sub-network" than those who took little or no advantage of the newsgram opportunity to communicate with peers, and wanted to see whether the extent of identification with the Title I sub-network appeared related to patterns of technical assistance use. Table 11 below presents the data related to newsgram submission.

TABLE 11

Grouping of projects according to the number of Support System newsgrams returned

Number of newsgrams returned:	0-1	2-4
Projects:	NOMAD, HOSTS, PTR, Florida Conquest, PREDICT, Catch Up, EPSF	Seaport, PTI, HIT, Discovery, Flagstaff, Title I RC, CHILD, CU-KU, IBRS, IBI, RER, Sec. Credit, IRIT
	Of the projects that returned 0-1 newsgrams...	Of the projects that returned 2-4 newsgrams....
	71% are veterans	69% are novices
	75% are part-time	62% are part-time
	75% are NDN-funded or non-funded	85% are OPBE-funded or NDN-funded
	75% are PIP-1 or Other	69% are PIP-2 or Migrant
	75% are outside The NETWORK time zone	62% are inside NETWORk time zone
	63% entered in 1975	77% entered in 1976 or 1977

The Table shows that projects making most use of the newsgram fit the same description as those using the greatest amount and most different modes of technical assistance: they tended to have novice coordinators, be newly entered in the NDN, and be OPBE-funded. To explore the pattern further we compiled the overall technical assistance scores for each project in the two newsgram usage groups and calculated an average overall technical assistance score for each group. The group that returned 0-1 newsgrams had an average overall technical assistance transaction score of 4.3 as compared with an average overall score of 8.8 for the group that returned 2-4 newsgrams.

Returning to the assumption about greater newsgram use reflecting greater *sub-network* identity we decided to look at newsgram use by comparison with workshop participation since workshops were the other single most important networking strategy employed by the Support System. We reasoned that if projects who made most use of the newsgram also tended to participate more often in workshops then our assumption about newsgram use as a reflection of identity with the Title I sub-network would hold.

The average score for workshop participation for the group of infrequent newsgram users was 1.0 as compared with an average workshop score of 2.4 for those projects who returned 2-4 of the five newsgrams provided during the contract period. Thus it appears that projects who tended to participate in workshops also tended to take advantage of other opportunities to interact with their peers. These projects also tended to use more technical assistance than did projects who showed little participation in workshop and newsgram activities.

As noted above, one explanation for this finding might be that the projects who did not use the newsgram and took little part in workshops did not identify with the Title I sub-network to as great an extent as projects who participate in these networking strateties.

Another explanation might be that projects who scored low on workshop participation and newsgram return did not tend to see other projects as a significant source of information or support or did not tend to need information or support as much as projects who took more part in networking activities.

Whatever the explanation it seems clear that those projects who received the most technical assistance also tended to take advantage of opportunities which the Support System provided to interact with their peers.

We will now turn to an examination of variations in the content of technical assistance provided to the 21 projects.

WHAT COMPARATIVE PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS APPEAR RELATED TO VARIATIONS IN THE CONTENT OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED?

To determine whether any relationship existed between the content of technical assistance provided and the comparative projects characteristics, we grouped projects together on a characteristic at a time and computed the average per project frequency of technical assistance transactions dealing with each of eight need areas:

1. orientation
2. creating awareness
3. securing adoptions
4. providing training
5. assisting implementation
6. evaluating adoptions
7. management
8. relating to others involved in dissemination

As described earlier in this Chapter, the eight need areas were

identified from a content analysis of Support System documentation. Since most technical assistance transactions dealt with multiple need areas, Support System contact reports describing each of four transaction modes (on-site visits, in-person off-site consultation, telephone consultation, and requests for information) were content analyzed and counts were made of the frequency with which each project received help in each need area.

A series of Tables was then constructed displaying the average number of transactions dealing with each need area for each project in four comparative groupings:

by experience of the dissemination coordinator
by funding source
by program type
by date of project entry in Educational Programs That Work (EPTW)

We excluded groupings on three other comparative dimensions -- time commitment of the coordinator, time zone relationship to The NETWORK, and funding level -- on the grounds that these characteristics would not logically tend to influence the content of projects' needs for technical assistance.

In reporting the results of our analysis, however, we will look only at three of the comparative groupings: coordinator experience, date of project entry in EPTW and funding source. We have eliminated data on variation related to program type because we found in our analysis of mode and amount variation that a number of the comparative project characteristics were functioning as overlapping variables. That is, all of the PIP-2 projects (type) entered in 1976 (project experience) and all were OPBE-funded (funding source.) Similarly four of the five migrant projects (type) represented the total of non-funded (funding source) projects; and all projects in the *other* category (type) were NDN-funded (funding source.)

Since the content variation displayed in the program type grouping was essentially the same as that shown by funding source and year of entry into national dissemination, we will not report content variation by program type.

Table 12 on the next page displays the data showing average number of technical assistance transactions for each project in three comparative groupings dealing with the eight need areas listed above.

Looking at the first grouping -- dissemination coordinator experience -- we see that novices received significantly more help in every content area than veterans did. However, the two areas within which projects received the greatest amount of help are the same for novices and veterans: both groups received the most help dealing with creating awareness and project management.

The need area where novices and veterans show the greatest discrepancy for help received is securing adoptions. Novice coordinators received an average of 9.33 technical assistance transactions in this area as compared with only 1.67 for veterans.

Despite the fact that our analysis of the amounts and types of technical assistance used showed that novices tended to use more technical assistance than veterans, veterans did receive technical assistance in the same areas that novices did.

Turning to variations in content of technical assistance for project groupings by year of entry in USOE's Educational Programs That Work we note the following patterns. With one exception projects that entered in 1976 received more technical assistance in every need area than either more veteran projects entered in 1975 or more newly entered projects first listed in 1977. This is perhaps explained in part by the fact that the majority of projects first entered in 1976 had novice dissemination coordinators. It may also be explained by

TABLE 12

Average number of technical assistance transactions per project dealing with...

Projects grouped by:		orientation	creating awareness	securing adoptions	providing training	assisting implementation	evaluating adoptions	management	relating to others in dissemination
Experience of dissemination coordinator	Novices (N=12)	2.67	12.5	9.33	5.33	1.83	1.5	11.33	3.33
	Veterans	1.11	6.11	1.67	3.11	1.00	.56	4.78	2.00
Date of entry in EPTW	1975 (N=7)	1.00	8.71	5.57	2.43	1.14	.86	6.43	1.71
	1976 (N=11)	2.64	10.82	6.64	5.55	1.73	1.27	8.43	3.55
	1977 (N=3)	2.00	8.33	5.00	4.67	1.33	1.00	13.34	2.33
Funding Source	OPBE (N=8)	2.63	13.0	10.0	4.38	2.13	1.63	10.38	3.13
	Non-funded (N=4)	2.25	8.00	3.00	7.00	2.00	.50	10.75	4.50
	NDN (N=9)	1.33	5.11	3.89	3.22	.67	.89	5.88	1.67

the fact that most of the 1976 projects were also OPBE-funded PIP Disseminator projects. As noted in the previous discussion, the OPBE-funded projects tended to use more technical assistance than other projects, in part we suspect because their contracting agency had clear expectations that they would do so, and in part because they had a somewhat *bigger* dissemination job. That is, they were explicitly required to use the PIP materials in their dissemination efforts and to help adopters use and evaluate the PIP materials as well. Since there was some confusion and controversy surrounding the use of the PIP materials, it should not be surprising to find needs related to creating awareness and securing adoptions being treated more frequently among the OPBE-funded PIP projects than among others.

Management was the one need area where 1976 projects received fewer instances of technical assistance than projects entered in 1977. In fact the average number of technical assistance transactions provided to 1977-entered projects regarding management was the highest per project frequency for any grouping or any need area. Looking at management transaction frequency by funding source and by coordinator experience we see quite clearly that projects new to dissemination, projects with inexperienced disseminators, and projects with no dissemination funding all received major amounts of assistance related to management.

Looking to see what need areas held priority for projects in the year of entry groupings, we see that projects entered in 1975 and 1976 hold the same two priorities as the novice and veteran groupings: creating awareness and management. However, for the 1977 projects management is clearly a higher priority than any of the other need areas including creating awareness. The fact that two of the three 1977 projects were non-funded migrants in addition to being newly entered perhaps accounts for the high level of management concern reflected in the transaction frequency.

Grouping the projects by funding source shows essentially the same patterns as the other groupings: OPBE-funded projects exhibit a high level of concern regarding securing adoptions with an average of 10 technical assistance transactions per project in this area contrasted with 3 for non-funded projects and 3.89 for NDN-funded projects. Again, concern over the use of the PIP materials and the general inexperience of the disseminators for the OPBE-funded projects likely explains the high level of need related to securing adoptions.

Funding source grouping also seems to confirm the relationship between the lack of dissemination funding and needs related to project management. The four non-funded projects are the only ones for which more assistance was directed at management-related needs than needs tied to creating awareness.

Looking at the projects grouped by funding source we also see that the non-funded projects show a higher frequency of transactions addressing issues of relating to others in dissemination.

WHAT ADDITIONAL PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS DID THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE STAFF OBSERVE TO BE OF SIGNIFICANCE WITH REGARD TO VARIATIONS IN THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED?

In the earlier portions of this section we examined the 21 projects who were the Support System clients in an effort to identify characteristics related to quantitative differences in the amount, type, and content of the technical assistance they received.

In the last part of this section we will present several additional project characteristics which the Support System Project Director perceived to be significant in influencing both the quantity and the quality of the services provided. Having to do with the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors of the client projects, these

characteristics are neither measurable nor amenable to codification for cross-project comparison. Nevertheless, their salience in the Support system documentation and the Project Director's observations make them candidates for discussion here even if more formal analysis is not possible.

There are three qualitative dimensions along which the projects varied in ways that -- according to the Support System staff -- influenced the quantity and quality of technical assistance provided. Each dimension will be described in turn.

The extent to which the client project is able to translate problems to be solved or tasks to be accomplished into "needs" that the technical assistance agency might help address.

This dimension describes a cognitive characteristic that some projects seemed to have and others did not: that is, the ability to recognize that what they experienced as job-related tasks to be accomplished or problems to be solved could be *needs* for technical assistance, if viewed that way. In her Final Report the Support System Project Director wrote:

> *"There is a problem with the word 'need' when describing the content around which assistance is provided. After a year's experience it is fair to say that most of the 21 projects experienced very few 'needs.' They had problems, questions, and concerns. Often they were confronted with the necessity to perform tasks that were new to them. But rarely did they translate these conditions into a statement of 'need' for technical assistance.*
>
> *The project staff, like most competent professionals, do not naturally recognize that the terrible task they have to undertake is really a 'need for technical assistance' in disguise. Most professionals do not go around day after day thinking about ways to use help doing what they are being paid to do. A problem is not necessarily experienced by a client as a need for assistance. Very often, therefore, they do not know what they need."*

The extent to which the client project is receptive or open to being helped

There is a certain irony in the fact that the government funds technical assistance for its contractors under the assumption that the contractors will have problems and that they will be receptive to being helped with their problems. Yet some clients may view the need for technical assistance as an indicator of incompetence, while others have different reasons for not being open to being helped.

The Support System staff observed that both need for assistance and receptivity to being helped appeared to be critical ingredients in technical assistance transactions. Nevertheless, clients were encountered who were highly receptive to being helped -- without being in a great deal of difficulty; and there were clients facing very tough problems who were just not receptive to receiving technical assistance that might have helped. Client receptivity to technical assistance does appear to be open to influence, however. Among the factors that the Support System staff felt to be important determinants of client receptivity were the following:

1. The extent of congruence between the client and the technical assistance provider regarding the activities that constitute help: the greater the congruence, the greater the receptivity.
2. The client's previous history of receiving help, both from the particular technical assistance agency and from others: the more positive the history the greater the receptivity.
3. The comments about the helpfulness of the technical assistance agency made by others in a position to know -- this includes federal and state personnel, but applies most of all to comments from the client's peers: the more positive the comments the greater the receptivity.
4. The existence of other more convenient sources of help: the more known sources of help exist closer to home, the less likely the client will be receptive to help from the technical assistance agency.

5. The client's perception of his/her own competence vis a vis the technical assistance staff: clients who feel they know more than the technical assistance staff are not likely to be receptive to being helped by them.
6. The behavior of the technical assistance agency: the more the agency proves itself to be a source of help for the client, the more receptive the client is to being helped by the agency.

The extent to which clients are willing or able to engage in problem clarification before specific assistance is sought or provided

The most frustrating technical assistance transactions from the standpoint of the technical assistance provider occurred when requests for help were delegated by the dissemination coordinator in the client project to people who had no knowledge of the problem to be solved: e.g., a project director asking her secretary to call the Support System to see whether an on-site visit could be arranged to help develop some materials. When the secretary was pressed for the reason for the request the conditions under which the materials were to be used, etc. there was no way for the technical assistant to engage in a problem-oriented discussion.

Since according to problem solving experts such as Maier, the major defect in most people's problem-solving behavior is not related to any lack of creativity or competence in generalizing feasible solutions but rather in actively working on clarifying the nature of the problem, the client project's approach to problem-solving is a key factor in determining the quality of the technical assistance transaction.

SUMMARY

In Study Question 3 we examined variations in the amount, type, and content of assistance provided to the projects by grouping them

along several comparative dimensions.

With regard to variations in the amount and type of technical assistance provided we found that...

Projects that used the most technical assistance and the greatest number of different modes were...

- those who were newest on the job
- those whose projects had had least exposure in the NDN
- those who received clear, early messages from their funding agency that technical assistance would be available and that they were expected to use it (OPBE-funded projects)
- those who had a *bigger* job to do than some others: PIP-2s had to figure out how to incorporate the PIP into their dissemination strategy and also had explicit requirements to follow-up and evaluate adopters; migrant projects typically had less money and more complex projects to disseminate
- those who entered the NDN with a Title I *sub-network* identity (OPBE-funded projects, migrants, and 3 *others* first funded in 1977)
- Migrant projects, projects with veteran dissemination coordinators and projects with low or no funding tended to use on-site assistance more than others
- PIP-2 and migrant projects and projects with novice coordinators tended to use more telephone consultation than other projects
- PIP projects, *other* projects, and projects with novice coordinators tended to participate in workshops more than migrant projects and projects with veteran coordinators

Other findings about patterns in amount and type of assistance used...

- Time commitment and funding level do not appear to influence the amount of assistance used. However, funding level may influence the issue of some modes requiring project expenditures
- Distance from the technical assistance agency as measured by time zone appears to interact with the experience of the dissemination coordinator in patterns of technical assistance variation: novice coordinators outside The NETWORK time zone

received as much (or more) assistance as novice coordinators inside The NETWORK time zone. Veteran coordinators outside The NETWORK time zone received less assistance than veteran coordinators inside it.

With regard to variations in the content of technical assistance provided we found that...

- Inexperienced dissemination coordinators received more help in all eight need areas examined than did veteran disseminators
- Both novices and veterans received help in all eight need areas and both groups shared the same top two priority needs: creating awareness and management concerns.
- Novice coordinators show an extremely high level of concern related to securing adoptions as evidenced by the fact that projects in that group received an average of 9.33 technical assistance transactions related to securing adoptions as compared with 1.67 for veterans
- The more recently a project has entered national dissemination and the lower the funding level, the greater the project's need for assistance related to management.

This section also presented a number of qualitative dimensions which the Support System staff perceived to be of importance in regard to variations in service delivered. These characteristics had to do with the extent to which the project recognizes problems as amenable to solution through technical assistance, the extent to which the project is receptive to being helped, and the extent to which the project is willing or able to engage in problem clarification before seeking a specific form of assistance.

Study Question 4 will look at aspects of the context within which the projects and the technical assistance system operated which also appear to influence the provision of support services.

PART IV

QUESTION 4: WHAT OTHER FACTORS AFFECTED THE DELIVERY AND USE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE?

INTRODUCTION

In exploring the answers to the first three study questions we identified different sets of factors that appear related to the needs the projects experienced and the assistance they received. Question 1 presented a description of the demands on the projects emanating from the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy. These demands may be thought of as contextual factors that affected both the needs and the assistance provided.

Question 3 looked at several different factors associated with the projects themselves -- both quantifiable factors such as funding level and qualitative factors such as the existence of support for dissemination in the project's home district -- and described ways in which the provision of technical assistance varied in relation to those factors.

Study Question 4 sought to determine whether any other factors beyond contextual factors and project characteristics appeared to have affected projects' needs or the services provided by the Support System. Three sources of data were analyzed to identify other factors. The factors described below were identified from a review of three data sources:

- field notes prepared by The NETWORK research associate observing Title I/NDN dissemination activities
- tapes of interviews with the Support System Project Director
- review of Support System documentation

In all, six additional factors were identified as having affected

the provision of technical assistance by the Title I Support System. Each will be discussed in turn.

The Title I/NDN dissemination strategy as a technical assistance support

Although its primary purpose was to create awareness and stimulate adoptions, the Title I dissemination strategy appears to have functioned as a support for the Title I Support System's technical assistance approach in a variety of ways. First, the strategy provided many network-building opportunities in that it brought the 21 projects together five different times (albeit in five locations on a very demanding time schedule. To the extent that peer sharing is important to a technical assistance strategy, the dissemination effort itself included features that helped develop a tightly knit peer group. By the end of the five conferences the projects had sat through each other's two minute presentations five times, heard the USOE orientation speech to the participants an equal number of times, and shared the inevitable little problems of bad acoustics, malfunctioning A-V equipment and unpredictable airline delays. As data presented in Question 2 showed, the Support System was able to take advantage of the opportunity the five conferences presented for a great deal of workshop activity. Thus, when the Support System instituted the newsgram, a written vehicle for peer sharing, they were building on the peer sharing that had already been firmly established during the five conferences.

A second way that the Title I dissemination effort contributed to the use of technical assistance is that it provided the Support System Project Director with an opportunity to establish technical assistance relationships face to face with the clients. The Project Director used the five conferences to initiate workshops, engage in diagnosis, link projects to each other, and schedule individual consultation sessions with clients. Chances for follow-up technical assistance seem to have grown out of the interchanges made

possible because of the opportunity for clients and technical assistance staff to interact at the five conferences.

Finally, in spite of the grueling travel schedule, the conferences appear to have been viewed as a positive experience by most of the projects. The Support System could well have benefitted from a *"halo"* effect from the conferences which left most of the projects positively predisposed to the entire Title I/NDN dissemination effort -- including the technical assistance associated with it.

Responsiveness of USOE personnel to the perceptions of the technical assistance agency and the concerns of the projects

Technical assistance is usually thought of as a government support for implementing federal policy. The government hires a technical assistance contractor to provide technical help to a number of operational contractors who are responsible for implementing a specific policy (in this case a policy of upgrading the quality of education for disadvantaged children through the promotion of exemplary programs already developed for disadvantaged populations). This notion idealizes the real situation. New ventures, as most policy implementation efforts are, are never planned with all contingencies in mind, and therefore, problems that arise for operational contractors are not always problems for which strictly technical expertise is required. There are times when the government's expectations or intentions are not crystal clear. At these times, the recipients of technical assistance don't need help; they need a straight answer.

There appears to have been a close working relationship developed between USOE staff and the Support System staff which allowed the technical assistance agency to arrange meetings and confrontations between the projects and the federal project officers, in particular around the definition of an adoption vs. an adaptation in one

case and in the clarification of evaluation requirements for adopters in another.

This responsiveness on the part of USOE personnel allowed the technical assistance agency to act as an intermediary in a problem identification and solving process. In turn, playing the role of intermediary appears to have given the Support System Project Director credibility with the clients. She didn't defend the federal government, neither did she commiserate with the projects. By pushing for clarification both of the projects' problems and the funding agency's expectations she was giving herself added understanding of the technical requirements for which assistance could be planned. Having the Support System function in this intermediary, problem-clarifying role was supported by the OE project officers who were consistently open to collaborating with the technical assistance agency in solving the problems the projects faced.

Point in the life cycle of the client project when technical assistance becomes available

The Support System strategy called for initiating the relationship with D/D project clients by helping each project construct a plan for what it was going to do over the course of the next year, review that plan to identify where needs might arise, and decide how those anticipated needs would be met. The products resulting from this process were to be an activity plan and a technical assistance plan. However, the decision to create the Title I Support System was made not only after most of the 21 demonstration programs were funded, but also too close to the first regional awareness conference to allow time for developing comprehensive technical assistance plans; in particular, most of the available time was spent preparing or revising the programs' awareness materials and presentations, and then virtually all of the remaining time was devoted to issues considered more pressing than year long planning.

Consequently, the Support System was only able to launch a systematic planning effort in April, in the eighth month of the enterprise. Had the decision to create the Title I Support System been made earlier, the Support System would likely have had time to more fully implement the planning component of its strategy.

Length of technical assistance contract and scope of budget

A major premise of the Support System strategy is the importance of building technical assistance agency credibility not through posturing or promising but through the slow process of building up a record of consistent high quality service delivery. The willingness of the client projects to invest their time, effort, and emotional energy in this relationship-building process with an agency unknown to them is dependent in part on the clients' beliefs about how long the agency will be available to them. When the contract was signed, the anticipated availability of the Support System was nine months. When it is further realized how hectic the first five months were -- given not only the heavy travel schedule but also the foul Winter of '78 weather, both of which put project dissemination coordinators behind in their back-home work -- the time available for using the technical assistance agency was rather brief (a problem which USOE acknowledged). Support System relationships were just beginning to be solidified when the contract period was drawing to a close.

Separate from the clients' perceptions of Support System availability, the brief contract period and the limited number of technical assistance staff had a direct impact on the services provided in that decisions were made to be responsive to all projects, but only to initiate individually tailored technical assistance with those who were most obviously in need. This decision limited the amount of support that was made available to the experienced projects, a state of affairs that may have been prevented had the Support System budget

been large enough to support more than a single full-time staff person.

Multiple sources of technical assistance

Throughout the period of the Support System contract the projects had access to sources of technical assistance other than that which the Support System was providing. These sources included the three technical assistance/conference contractors funded through February, 1978 as part of the Title I dissemination strategy, the NDN Technical Assistance Brokerage which began operating in early Winter 1978, the NDA Education Materials Center at Far West Laboratory, and a variety of local consultants and sources of help in each project's own school district. While the study was not able to adequately document the extent to which the 21 projects used assistance from these other sources, it was clear that other kinds of technical assistance were used by some of the projects. We do know, for example, that each of the projects served by the three conference contractors received on-site visits to help them prepare for the regional conferences. Thus, it is not surprising to find that none of the projects served by the conference contractors received on-site visits from the Support System.

Timing of the dissemination-adoption cycle

The frequency analysis of content addressed in technical assistance transactions discussed in Question 2 showed that some task related needs such as creating awareness, securing adoptions, and providing training received a great deal of attention during the early months of Support System operation. Other dissemination tasks such as providing assistance during implementation or evaluating adoptions received relatively little attention during that period as did many project management tasks. To explore this trend further we arrayed the content transactions over time, to see whether any rela-

tionships would appear. The results are displayed in Table 13 below. As the year progressed the projects sought less assistance with awareness, and more with training and evaluating. While the October-May data shows a decrease in assistance sought for assisting implementation, a separate review of transactions for June 1978 - October 1978 showed a dramatic increase in assistance regarding implementation. Also interesting is the increase in the number of content transactions focusing on management concerns as the dissemination year progressed.

Table 13

Frequency of transactions by content in three month periods
October 1977 - November 1978

	September through November	December through February	March through May
Orientation Activities	4	21	17
Dissemination Activities			
Creating Awareness	96	65	44
Securing Adoptions	33	41	53
Providing Training	16	20	56
Assisting Implementation	12	12	7
Evaluating Adoptions	5	8	10
Management Activities	37	42	100
Relating with Others Involved in Diffusion	10	21	27

Thus as the data in Question 2 suggested and Table 13 confirms, the projects' needs for assistance and the content of the assistance provided are quite clearly related to the phase of the dissemination-adoption cycle in which the project is involved. Projects showed little need for assistance related to implementation and evaluation from October-May because very few of them had reached the point of having adopters at that stage. Once the awareness conferences were ended and potential adopters were on the line, needs for assistance with training and securing adoptions increased. In general it seems that once the newness of the projects' involvement in dissemination decreased, the project begins to expand its focus from assistance for task-related needs to assistance that encompasses a significant number of project management concerns as well.

Conditions in the D/D home district

Two other contextual factors stand out as affecting the delivery of technical assistance by the Title I Support System: the political and organizational health of the D/D project's home district and the degree of local support for the project's involvement in national dissemination.

School districts, like all organizations, experience ebbs and flows of organizational health. In districts where organizational health is strained, the D/D project often has clear needs for support; yet the same conditions which produced a need for support may also have the effect of reducing the project's receptivity to it. Unstable conditions and weak support may make the dissemination coordinator self-protective, cautious, and reluctant to risk criticism for having problems and for getting help outside the district.

Secondly, the degree of district support for national dissemination, regardless of the health of the district, can play an important part in the project's technical assistance. National dissemination is clearly a federal priority, and the local district's motivation for participating in this effort appears to range from

naiveté to opportunism to local pride in their program. Dissemination coordinators who are rather immediately and intensely socialized into the federal perspective (five national workshops in a two month time span) sometimes return to a less than receptive home base. Projects who felt caught in a cross fire between federal priorities (300 adoptions in 45 states) and district demands for time and allegiance to local priorities appeared less able to take advantage of the substantive content of the technical assistance than their counterparts whose local support was stronger.

SUMMARY

Having examined factors related to the context within which the projects were operating and factors associated with the projects themselves, the study attempted to identify other factors that had an effect on the needs of the projects and/or the technical assistance provided by the Support System. From an analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data sources, six additional factors were identified that appear to have influenced the technical assistance operation:

1. The Title I/NDN dissemination strategy functioned as a structural support for the technical assistance strategy employed by the Support System.
2. The responsiveness of USOE personnel to collaborating with the Support System to clarify and solve the projects' problems enhanced Support System effectiveness and credibility.
3. The point in the life cycle of the client project when technical assistance is made available may interfere with the implementation of some technical assistance strategies such as the development of technical assistance plans.

4. The limited duration of the Support System contract and the scope of the budget may have interfered with the development of relationships with some clients, and curtailed services to others.
5. The presence of technical assistance sources other than the Support System probably had an effect on the extent to which the Support System provided services to some clients.
6. The projects' needs for technical assistance appear to change over time. As they move through the cycles of the adoption process (awareness, training, etc.) needs change accordingly. Also, requests for management assistance increased as activities involving much travel (awareness, training) begin to level off.
7. Conditions in the project's home district may affect the extent to which the project is willing or able to use technical assistance.

QUESTION 5: ACCORDING TO THE 21 PROJECTS, WHAT WAS THE UTILITY AND WHAT WERE THE EFFECTS OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE THEY RECEIVED FROM THE SUPPORT SYSTEM?

INTRODUCTION

Data to answer this question was derived from structured interview/discussions conducted in June 1978 with each of the projects by a NETWORK research associate. Despite the fact that the interview data was collected by a member of The NETWORK research staff, we believe the projects to have been candid and open in providing responses to the questions posed.

Interviews (see interview protocol included in Appendix C) included multiple choice questions to elicit the following information:

- How useful did the projects' dissemination coordinators perceive the technical assistance they received from the Support System to be?
- How much did the projects' dissemination coordinators' perceive they increased the knowledge or ability related to dissemination between September 1977 and June 1978?

Open-ended questions were also asked which prompted the projects to elaborate upon their assessment of the utility of services received by isolating and describing the particular technical assistance transactions which exerted an influence upon their work.

Similarly, when projects reported an increase in knowledge or ability, open-ended questions were used by the interviewer to prompt the interviewees to elaborate upon the possible sources or explanations for the perceived increase.

Thus, in response to the question *"to what extent do you attribute this increase to outside assistance you received?"* projects were able to allocate responsibility for their perceived increases to technical assistance (from the Support System and other sources) but also to exper-

ience, to interaction with peers, to other sources of assistance, and so on.

The answer to Question 5 is provided in two parts, both of which are organized around the five categories of items discussed in the interviews (and described earlier in this report):

support
orientation
dissemination tasks
management
relating to others in dissemination

The first part provides an analysis of the projects' responses to the two multiple choice questions based on the interviews: *"How useful did the projects' perceive Support System technical assistance to be?"* and *'How much did the projects' dissemination coordinators perceive they'd increased in knowledge and ability between September and June?"*

The second part summarizes and quotes from projects' responses to the open-ended questions which sought to identify what the projects' perceived to be the effects of the technical assistance they received (*"How was it useful?"* as opposed to *"Was it useful?"*), and what the projects perceived to be the source of any reported increased ability or knowledge.

HOW USEFUL DID PROJECTS PERCEIVE SUPPORT SYSTEM ASSISTANCE TO BE?

Based on the analysis of areas within which projects expressed needs for or received technical assistance (described in Chapter 1), twenty technical assistance content areas in five categories were listed. Projects were asked whether they had received any form of assistance from the Support System for each need area in turn. Those who reported they had received assistance were then asked to make a judgment as to its utility: Not Useful, Somewhat Useful, or Very Useful.

In Table 14 the twenty areas are listed in the first column within each of the five major categories. The first column of numbers on the left indicates the number of projects who answered *"no"* to the first question, *"Did you receive technical assistance related to _____?"* The next three columns indicate the number of projects that gave each of the three possible responses to the second question, *"How useful was the assistance you received?"*

As the table indicates the perceived utility ratings were placed on a scale: not useful = 1 point; somewhat useful = 2 points; and very useful = 3 points. Then, for each dimension of assistance, the average perceived utility rating was computed. These numbers appear in the right hand column. Thus, Table 14 displays the number of projects who received assistance in each area, the utility rating each gave it, and the average utility rating across all projects reporting they had received assistance.

Support

The average perceived utility rating of the 20 projects who reported they had received moral support and encouragement was 2.85 of a possible 3.00. When the average utility rankings of the three items comprising the Support category are aggregated to yield an average utility ranking for the entire category, we find that all supportive transactions, taken as a whole, receive the highest utility ranking (2.74) of the five categories. One of the fourteen people perceived assistance on the dimension *"informational resources"* to have been *"not useful"*.

Orientation assistance

Orientation assistance -- as a category -- received the second highest overall utility rating (2.62) of the five categories. Within the category all projects who reported receiving assistance to: understand the

TABLE 14

Usefulness of Technical Assistance Provided by the Title I Support System As Reported by the Recipients of the Service

	Technical Assistance	Did Not Report receiving this form of Assistance	Number of Projects Who Reported That the Assistance They Received From the Title I Support System was . . . Not Useful (1)	Somewhat Useful (2)	Very Useful (3)	Average Rating
SUPPORT	Moral support and encouragement	1	0	3	17	2.85
	Logistical support	2	0	5	14	2.74
	Access to informational resources in response to specific requests	7	1	4	9	2.57
ORIENTATION	Understanding the dissemination process	2	0	7	12	2.63
	Understanding USOE guidelines/expectations	2	0	7	12	2.56
	Identifying their own dissemination-related needs	9	0	5	7	2.58
TASK-RELATED	Awareness Activities					
	Developing materials	7	1	3	10	2.64
	Using PIP	12	1	4	4	2.33
	Making presentations	3	1	5	12	2.61
	Adoption Activities					
	Determining criteria	12	0	5	4	2.44
	Following up potential adopters	5	0	7	9	2.56
	Assessing adopter needs	12	0	7	2	2.22
	Training Adopters	14	0	1	6	2.86
MANAGEMENT	Planning timeline for dissemination	11	2	2	6	2.40
	Gaining local support and approval	16	0	3	2	2.40
	Involving staff in dissemination	13	0	6	2	2.25
	Documenting dissemination activities	7	1	3	10	2.64
RELATIONAL	Coordinating with State Facilitators, Title I Coordinators	7	1	8	5	2.21
	Exchanging with peers	1	1	13	6	2.25
	Referral to non-NETWORK sources of assistance	13	2	0	6	2.50

diffusion process, understand USOE guidelines/expectations or identify their own dissemination - related needs, rated it useful.

Task related assistance

One dimension of the task related needs category -- *"training adopters"* -- received the highest utility rating of all twenty dimensions probed. The overall utility rating for task related assistance was just slightly lower than the overall rating for orientation assistance. On three of the task dimensions examined (*"developing awareness materials", using the PIP"*, and *"making presentations"*) one project out of 14, 9, and 8 respectively, perceived Support System assistance to have been *"not useful."*

Management assistance

Assistance provided to projects in relation to their management functions was rated as useful by all but 3 of the projects that reported receiving it. Two out of ten projects reporting assistance on the dimension *"planning a timeline for dissemination activities"* rated the help they received as *"not useful."*

Despite the emphasis on planning in the Support System's technical assistance strategy, the agency encountered three obstacles in its attempt to help projects plan their dissemination strategies. First, there was a problem of the projects not being able to predict which states would invite them back for more awareness or training. There was also confusion among the projects about which NDN-wide activities they were required to attend, and difficulty getting advance information about dates, times and locations of required meetings. Thus, basic information the projects needed for planning was unobtainable.

Second, there was a continual and pervading uncertainty about future funding including, for several months, not being able to determine when the D/D RFP would be forthcoming. Although USOE personnel reiterated that

projects should operate as if future funding would be forthcoming, without the actual commitment in hand, several projects felt they could not plan their efforts (or make commitments to adopters) beyond the term of their existing contracts.

Third, as discussed earlier, the Support System had not been anticipated or funded when the projects first began developing their dissemination efforts. By the time the Support System was available to provide planning assistance, the regional awareness conferences loomed so large on the horizon that most projects saw the requirements of the immediate business at hand as a more pressing priority than planning.

Relational assistance

Of the three dimensions included in this category -- *"coordinating with State Facilitators and Title I Coordinators," "exchanging with peers,"* and *"referral to non-NETWORK sources of assistance"* -- the second, *"exchanging with peers"* was reported used by the most projects: 20 of 21. This category also contains the only other dimension besides *"planning a timeline for dissemination"* for which as many as two projects found services *"not useful."* This dimension is *"referral to non-NETWORK sources of assistance."* It is impossible to determine the extent to which the *"not useful"* rating is a reflection of the quality of services provided by the referred source, and to what extent it is an assessment of the referral process.

Response regarding referral to non-NETWORK sources of assistance was further interesting in that the other 6 people who reported having received referrals all rated it *"very useful."* One of these -- the dimension *"planning a time line for diffusion"* -- is significant because such planning was a key part of the explicit Support System strategy; three factors were mentioned that interfered with this strategy being implemented as originally intended.

On the positive side of the ledger, in 96 percent of all the instances in which dissemination coordinators reported that they received some form of assistance, the assistance received was rated either *"somewhat useful"* or *"very useful."* And of special note, given its importance in the Support System approach to delivering assistance, all 20 dissemination coordinators who reported they received support and encouragement from The NETWORK indicated that this support and encouragement was useful. Furthermore, this item received an average 2.85 utility rating out of a possible 3.00.

Table 15 below summarizes the twelve areas for which projects reported the highest average utility rating for technical assistance received from the Title I Support System. Table 16 displays the overall utility rating for each category of assistance.

TABLE 15

Twelve areas for which projects reported highest average utility rating for technical assistance received from Title I Support System

		Average Utility Rating	Total # Reporting
1.	Training Adopters	2.86	7
2.	Moral Support and Encouragement	2.85	20
3.	Logistical Support	2.74	19
4.	Developing Awareness Materials	2.64	14
	Documenting Dissemination Activities	2.64	14
5.	Understanding Diffusion Process	2.63	19
6.	Making Awareness Presentations	2.61	18
7.	Identifying Their Own Dissemination-related Needs	2.58	12
8.	Acquiring Information Resources in Response to Specific Requests	2.57	14
9.	Understanding USOE Guidelines/Expectations	2.56	19
	Following Up on Potential Adopters	2.56	16
10.	Referral to Non-NETWORK Sources of Assistance	2.50	8

TABLE 16

Average, overall utility rating for each
category of technical assistance
reported received by Title I Support System clients
June 1978

Support	2.74
Orientation Assistance	2.62
Task-related Assistance	2.54
Management Assistance	2.46
Relational Assistance	2.31

WHAT INCREASES IN UNDERSTANDING AND/OR ABILITY DID THE PROJECTS REPORT?

Table 17 displays the extent of perceived improvement in either understanding or ability reported by the dissemination coordinators for the projects. This table is constructed in the same way as Table 14 except that the first column of numbers on the left indicates the number of projects who reported that the question about improvement on that dimension was *"not applicable."* Thus, the ten dissemination coordinators whose projects did not have Project Information Packages (PIPs) reported that the item *"Using PIP"* was not applicable to them.

Understanding the role of the D/D in the NDN

Table 17 indicates that 20 out of 21 dissemination coordinators perceived that they increased their understanding of the dissemination process during the period under study. A smaller number of projects (16)

TABLE 17

Perceived increase in understanding or ability
between September 77 - May 78
reported by Title I Support System clients
June 1978

	Knowledge or Ability Area	Reported "Not Applicable"	Number of D/D Projects Who Reported That Between October and June They . . . Stayed the Same (1)	Improved Some (2)	Improved Substantially (3)	Average Rating
D/D ROLE IN NDN	Understanding the dissemination process	--	1	4	16	2.71
	Identifying their own dissemination-related needs	--	5	3	13	2.38
TASK REPORTED	Awareness Activities					
	Developing materials	--	2	5	14	2.57
	Using PIP	10	3	4	4	2.09
	Making presentations	1	1	10	9	2.40
	Adoption Activities					
	Determining adoption criteria	2	1	6	12	2.58
	Following up potential adopters	1	3	5	12	2.45
	Assessing adopter needs	1	1	9	9	2.42
	Securing adoptions	1	2	4	14	2.60
	Training Adopters	2	1	7	11	2.53
	Assisting Implementation	9	2	7	3	2.08
MANAGEMENT	Planning timeline for dissemination	2	4	5	10	2.32
	Gaining local support and approval	2	12	2	5	1.63
	Acquiring resources	1	3	6	11	2.40
	Involve staff in dissemination activities	3	4	6	8	2.22
	Documenting dissemination activities	--	3	4	14	2.52
RELATIONAL	Coordinating with State Facilitators	3	2	7	9	2.39
	Coordinating with Title I Coordinators	2	7	4	8	2.05
	Exchanging with peers	1	5	4	11	2.30

perceived an increase in their ability to identify their own dissemination-related needs.

Ability to carry out dissemination activities

A majority of the projects perceived substantial increase in their ability to perform five dissemination related tasks during the period under study:

- secure adoptions
- determine adoption criteria
- develop materials
- train adopters
- follow up with potential adopters

A large number of people responded *"not applicable"* to the items *"assisting implementation,"* indicating, as noted earlier, that many of the projects had not yet reached that phase of the adoption process at the time of the survey, June 1978.

Ability to perform project management functions

A look at management dimensions on Table 17 indicates that more projects reported that they *"stayed the same"* on the *"ability to gain local support and approval for dissemination"* than on any other dimension. At first glance, it might appear that the Support System was neglecting an important area of dissemination coordinator functioning; however this tentative conclusion seems refuted by two facts: (1) in June, 1978, 18 of the 21 dissemination coordinators reported that they had the full support of their LEA for their dissemination efforts in the 1977-1978 year; and (2) all five of the dissemination coordinators who reported receiving assistance in this dimension perceived that assistance to be useful. (Table 14)

Ability to relate to others involved in dissemination

With regard to this category, seven people perceived that they did not change in their ability to coordinate efforts with Title I Coordinators -- this is the third highest *"stayed the same"* rating. Fifteen projects reported improvement in their ability to exchange ideas and support with peers and sixteen people reported increased ability to work with NDN State Facilitators.

Summary of projects' perceived increases in ability and understanding

Table 18 below lists ten areas within which projects reported the greatest average extent of improvement from September, 1977 to May, 1978. Note that seven of the ten areas (asterisked) are also included in the twelve technical assistance areas receiving the highest utility ratings from the projects. (Table 15)

TABLE 18

Eleven areas within which
Title I Support System clients reported
highest average rate of improvement
between September 77 - May 78

		Average Reported Improvement	Total # Reporting
*1.	Understanding the Dissemination Process (orientation)	2.71	(21)
2.	Securing Adoptions (task)	2.60	(20)
3.	Determining Adoption Criteria (task)	2.58	(19)
*4.	Developing Materials (task)	2.57	(21)
*5.	Training Adopters (task)	2.53	(19)
*6.	Documenting Dissemination Activities (management)	2.52	(21)
*7.	Following Up Potential Adopters (task)	2.45	(20)
8.	Assessing Adopter Needs (task)	2.42	(20)
*9.	Making Presentations (task)	2.40	(20)
	Acquiring Resources (management)	2.40	(20)
10.	Coordinating With State Facilitators (relational)	2.39	(18)

PROJECTS COMMENTS ON THE EFFECTS OF SUPPORT SYSTEM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

As noted earlier, the June interview included open-ended questions to which projects responded by describing, the effects of particular technical assistance and the way(s) in which they felt outside assistance (from a variety of sources) had been influential in increasing their dissemination-related knowledge and skills. In the pages that follow, comments made by the projects are presented and discussed.

The effects of moral and logistical support

The high utility rating assigned by the projects to the support and encouragement they received is further emphasized by the projects' comments on the effects of this support during the June survey. In almost every instance coordinators described a particular incident in which support and encouragement was critical:

> *"I appreciated it. Susan sat in on my session and said it was good. It came at a time that I needed to hear encouragement."*

And another explained:

> *"We were in quite an emotional situation. A lot of people had participated and contributed to the D/D proposal. But because of technical problems we lost it. It helped us to work through the process."*

And again:

> *"Every step of the way... Just to have a toll-free number to call someone who has knowledge of the big broad picture. It is helpful to talk through what is bothering you. Also, Susan never makes you feel that you should not have asked the question. I would ask her anything. That kind of support has been helpful."*

And finally:

> *"When I get discouraged, I usually give Susan a call and she talks things through with me. I find out that other people have the same problems (no adoption) and it does not make me feel as left out."*

The effects of orientation assistance

As Table 18 showed, projects reported the greatest increase in their *"understanding of the dissemination process"* with 16 of 21 projects noting *"substantial improvement."*

The influence of technical assistance in facilitating the orientation of the projects to the NDN and the larger context of dissemination was elaborated by projects' comments during the interviews. Such comments suggest that the Support System staff was helpful in clarifying the operational system in existence, as well as its norms and values, and in identifying the individuals with whom it is important to interact, as well as the roles they were intended to play. The experience of knowing specifically what to do and whom to contact was an important criterion underlying projects' comments about the usefulness of Support System orientation assistance.

One coordinator explained:

> *"The NETWORK has done more than anyone else for me to tie new projects in with what is already happening in the mainstream... The assistance I received provided us with a lot of printed materials and put us in direct touch with different people. The NETWORK is more aware of the process from the beginning to advanced stages than we are. They are able to think further ahead than us and put us in touch with people who can help us."*

Another related:

> *"It was all completely new information. It gave me a perspective on how I am doing and how I fit into a larger scheme of things. It had a road map effect for me."*

According to some projects the effect of orientation and context-setting assistance was not solely cognitive -- learning their place and what was expected of them in the NDN. It also provided psychological

support for some individuals to whom the experience of becoming a *"disseminator"* was rife with uncertainty:

> *"Understanding that big picture and everything was so overwhelming. Knowing that they would explain things was so reassuring. Knowing what developmental stage we were at made it less overwhelming."*

> *"It's like being thrown into a well. I don't know how to get out! I call them for help. I'm not even sure what I need. (Learning the) whole process is like climbing a ladder. I take one step with help, feel comfortable; then the next step I suddenly don't know what to do next -- again."*

The technical assistance agency was clearly viewed by some projects as an important avenue for getting reliable information about USOE guidelines and expectations. Twelve of the nineteen projects who reported having received help in this regard, rated it very useful. One project explained:

> *"They have been helpful, in particular, in confirming or disconfirming rumors, providing perceptions of impending changes in policy or clarifying partially articulated procedures. I have the feeling that (the Support System staff) have close access to (USOE personnel). That's important to me.*

Another project perceived that:

> *"The (Support System) seems able to give OE a push... and providing what assistance it needs to do its job."*

Not surprisingly, the major sources for learning about dissemination cited by nearly all the projects were outside of their own projects. Only two coordinators indicated that *"understanding the dissemination process"* was something they acquired on their own. Two-thirds of those who reported receiving orientation assistance pointed to one or more specific Support System activities in which knowledge about dissemination or the NDN was transferred.

Services mentioned included:

- instruction at Support System workshops
- consultation with technical assistance staff
- information and resources provided

In addition to NETWORK services, projects pointed to:

- conversations with other D/Ds
- opportunities to interact with OE and NDN personnel at regional conferences
- assistance from technical assistance/conference contractors

as influencing their growth in understanding dissemination and their roles in the NDN.

It appears that personal contact presents an important source of orienting information. Further, what all cited sources of orientation assistance have in common is first-hand experience in dissemination and familiarity with the NDN enterprise.

The effects of task-related assistance

Seven of the eleven areas within which projects reported the highest rate of increase in ability or understanding (Table 18) were task-related, with *"securing adoptions"* ranking second highest. Fourteen of twenty projects reported *"substantial improvement"* in their ability to secure adoptions. Comments made by projects during the June interviews indicate that many of them directly attributed their increased ability to the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy that brought them face to face with large numbers of Title I adopters in the regional conferences and provided them with specialized technical assistance along the way. Thus, to a certain extent the conference strategy was viewed by the projects as a form of assistance in increasing their ability to secure adoptions.

In response to the interviewer's open-ended question about whether *"outside assistance"* had influenced each project's reported increase in ability, fourteen projects mentioned specific types of outside influence that they felt made a difference in their being able to secure adoptions. Several projects pointed to the usefulness of sample instruments they were provided in learning ways to conduct negotiations with adopters and in critiquing their own home-grown forms and procedures. Sample adoption agreements and needs assessment forms were distributed to all 21 projects by the Support System and discussions on their application occurred at Support System minisessions during the regional conferences and at the workshop for PIP Disseminators in February.

Other forms of *"outside assistance"* specifically mentioned as significant in securing adoptions were:

- technical assistance workshops
- conversations with other D/Ds

From an analysis of projects' responses about the role of outside assistance in increasing their ability to secure adoptions, it appears that the experience of the coordinator plays an important role in determining the extent to which outside assistance is needed or used. Twice as many novice as veteran coordinators mentioned consultation or sample materials provided by the Support System as significant in relationship to this need. Veterans state that they rely on their own internal resources and experience.

As with *"planning a timeline for dissemination"* it may be that the experience of actually negotiating and securing adoptions is an important means by which the disseminator improves upon the ability to carry out the various processes involved.

In light of the confusion and conflicting demands noted earlier in

this report (Chapter 3, Part 1) regarding the definition of an adoption, it is important to note that *"determining criteria for adoption"* was the third most highly improved area projects reported with twelve out of nineteen indicating *"sustantial improvement."*

What becomes clear from projects' comments about the influence of *"outside assistance"* in improving their ability to set adoption criteria is that projects felt they were essentially left on their own to decide what a valid adoption would be. The role of the Support System reported by the projects was one of confirming the ambiguity and encouraging the projects to determine adoption criteria consistent with the intent of the guidelines, as best they could on their own.

Two projects' comments are quite clear on this point:

> *"Although there seem to be a variety of interpretations, I understand we are supposed to decide from the Support System staff. Since there are nationally different points of view, it is hard for her to be more useful than that."*

> *"I did not say the assistance was "very useful" (in determining adoption criteria) because the direction was so ambiguous from the funding source. We just had to struggle through it ourselves and having Susan to muddle through it with us was useful."*

Projects also cited the specific assistance of some USOE personnel as important, especially their willingness to concede when policies were unclear and to push for clarity and *"answers"* in ambiguous situations.

One final observation about the effects of outside assistance on task-related abilities reported by some projects. With regard to *"developing materials"* and *"training adopters"* (the fourth and fifth areas of most increased ability reported), a few projects indicated that the assistance received from the Support System served to model behaviors or demonstrate standards which the projects perceived as worthy of emulation in their own efforts. Though the number of projects who cited

the *"modeling"* phenomenon as an important source of influence is small, their comments nevertheless suggest that technical assistance may include the process by which help is provided as well as the content (knowledge, skill, information) being transferred.

> *"The most potent thing for me was the modeling of a good workshop. Exposure to the Andover Workshop really helped me refine what I'm doing because of the modeling."*
>
> *"The Support System puts out nice publications that set a tone for quality we hope to achieve."*
>
> *"I realize that the Support System workshops can be a model for me in thinking about training design."*

The effects of management assistance

As noted previously, two projects rated the planning assistance they'd received from the Support System as *"not useful."* Projects' responses to open-ended questions regarding the effects of technical assistance for management functions provides additional information about the difficulties encountered in *"planning a timeline for dissemination."*

One dissatisfied project noted:

> *"The assistance was not useful. The (sample dissemination) timeline did not jive with what happened here. It took me much longer to do the groundwork."*

The role of experience in influencing the ability to plan for dissemination is also highlighted by some projects' comments:

> *"Lack of experience makes it hard to predict how the whole thing will work. Unless you've had the experience it is difficult to anticipate with confidence that it will work for you as it does for others."*
>
> *"I need to know the steps out there; I am eventually going to get there, but until I do, I don't absorb the steps. It never dawned on me how long all this would take. Once I had worked through part of it, I could better gauge what's coming next."*

It appears that rather than eliminating the need for planning, experience with the dissemination process can infuse planning activity with meaning.

The major effect of the planning assistance cited by the projects was to provide a standard or set of milestones against which to measure their progress.

> *"We felt like we were not making any progress. When I looked at the thing I'd planned, I saw I accomplished what I tried to do."*

"Documenting dissemination activities" was the management area within which projects reported the greatest increase in ability. Support System assistance in this area was quite prominently cited by the projects as the source of their improvement. Fourteen of the twenty-one projects reported implementing record-keeping systems based on sample documentation forms that the Support System provided.

As noted earlier, one dimension of managment functions, *"gaining local support and approval"* for dissemination, received the greatest number of *"stayed the same"* ability ratings. Twelve of the nineteen projects responding to the question indicated that they had experienced no change in this area. Comments by projects indicated that the major reason for the *"no change"* response was that in most cases district administrators' support for dissemination was forthcoming. Some projects, however, did experience intra-district tensions arising from the dissemination activity. Their comments help bring the nature of the problem encountered into focus:

> *"School boards are not always clear on the merits and values of using local project personnel for disseminating programs nationwide. ...a clear, substantive rationale from OE might help prevent problems from occurring. Such a rationale could include anticipated values to local district personnel, ...the importance which OE places on developer-demonstrator participation in and contributions to dissemination of JDRP-validated programs, appreciation*

for the concerns district administrators may express (wherever not fully informed and convinced) regarding the absence of regular teachers and staff during dissemination activities.

I believe that such a (communication) from OE... directed to superintendents... would help bolster the position of project staff against future difficulties in the ominous era of Proposition 13..."

"The major problem centers around a discrepancy in expectations for project goals and activities between the district and USOE. ...the problem is being resolved... continuous discussion of project needs and activities between district personnel and me is required. This is necessary because (district) administrators have not been involved in NDN activities and consequently it becomes my responsibility to explain needs, procedures and expectation.

Also, three different administrators make decisions about project functions; each one has a different amount of information about the project and a different level of previous involvement. This does pose a challenge and we work on it."

As Table 14 indicates, only 5 of the 21 projects reported that they received technical assistance related to securing local support for dissemination. Of the 5, 2 rated the assistance *"very useful"* and 3 rated it *"somewhat useful."* It appears that both the relatively low incidence of concern in this area and the nature of the concerns that do arise make it an area not easily amenable to improvement through technical assistance. Those projects that did report having been helped in their efforts for local support indicated that the role of technical assistance was to help them better understand what would be required so that they, in turn, could effectively communicate that to their superiors. One project noted:

"She (technical assistant) explained what commitment would be expected of us and I was able to explain it to my superior. My SEA was afraid it (dissemination activity) would take us beyond our capacity. Based on assistance received, we were able to participate in a limited way."

The effects of relational assistance

Despite the relatively low overall utility rating (2.32) assigned to the category *"Relational Assistance,"* comments by the projects described the effects they attributed to Support System mechanisms for exchanging with their peers.

> *"These (news bulletins) gave me ideas and a basis to compare our progress and to have a feeling of collegueship. I found out what worked for other projects in difficult situations."*
>
> *"I like knowing everybody else and where I am in relation to them. The MEMO and newsgram help me to keep from feeling isolated."*
>
> *"It's up to date, really fast turnaround. Never feels like old news. I have a personal and professional attachment to the other D/Ds and I like keeping in touch that way."*
>
> *"Situations in workshops when we connected with each other to solve problems were important."*
>
> *"At our workshops there was a good exchange of ideas about what worked and what did not work for them. It helped me look at what I have been doing in relation to other projects and eventually develop correspondence around particular issues with some other projects."*

It appears that in addition to gaining access to some ideas and solutions their peers may offer, strategies for bringing the projects in touch with one another provided them with opportunities to measure their own progress and efforts against those of others.

Projects' assessment of "most significant assistance received"

One final open-ended question posed to the projects in the June interviews asked each one to identify *"the most significant help"* they'd received from any source between September, 1977 and May, 1978. The

most obvious characteristic of the responses is the diversity of opinion they represent concerning what projects found to be significantly helpful. Four projects were either unable or unwilling to cite a specific significantly helpful episode and instead made comments about the general helpfulness of the Support System assistance they'd received. The remaining seventeen responses were as follows:

receiving on-site consultation - 4 projects
attending workshop for PIP disseminators - 3 projects
receiving telephone consultation - 2 projects
receiving moral support and encouragement - 2 projects
receiving training resource package - 1 project
receiving clarification of what was expected - 1 project
recognizing commonality of D/D problems - 1 project
having Far West Lab prepare project impact statement - 2 projects
attending presentation by D/D at NDN Confernece - 1 project

Although 18 of the 21 projects identified some form of Support System technical assistance as being the most significant help they received, there was a wide range among projects with regard to what specific assistance they cited. In fact, even in cases where the same event or mode of assistance was cited by several projects, each project seemed to have benefitted from a different aspect of the assistance.

For instance, the PIP Disseminator Workshop was cited by three projects, but each had a different reason for selecting it. One project benefitted most from what she called the *"modeling"* of a good workshop. The second project pointed to the *"PIP Strategy Planning Model"* which served as the organizing framework for the information the workshop conveyed. The third project cited the workshop as the place where she received assistance determining when and how to follow up with adopters after awareness activities.

Similarly, two projects who most valued telephone consultation presented differing perspectives. One project valued telephone consultation because it offered *"the opportunity to talk through problems*

as they arise." The other project recalled a specific instance of telephone consultation in which materials she had prepared and mailed to the Support System were discussed and revised with her over the phone.

Thus, though the responses indicate that four projects found site visits to have been the most significant help they received, while three valued a workshop experience and two cited telephone consultation, there is no clearly discernable preference among the clients for one form of help over another. Further, it seems evident that in most cases the particular mode of the assistance is so entwined with the content that projects do not cite either mode or content as significant all by itself.

SUMMARY

In June, 1978, interviews were conducted with each of the 21 projects served by the Title I Support System. The purpose of the interviews was to determine how the projects rated the usefulness of the technical assistance services they received, and to explore whether the projects perceived an increase in their understanding or ability related to program dissemination.

Projects were also asked to describe specific effects of technical assistance they reported receiving and to assess the extent to which any reported increase in ability or understanding was the result of outside assistance.

Overall the projects rated the assistance they received from the Support System as being useful. Of the twenty areas of assistance they were asked to assess, projects rated the following as the five most useful:

Assistance related to...	training adopters
	moral support and encouragement
	logistical support
	developing awareness materials
	documenting dissemination activities

Most projects reported an increase in understanding and ability as well. The five areas within which the most improvement was reported were:

understanding the dissemination process
securing adoptions
determining adoption criteria
developing materials
training adopters

Open-ended comments made by the projects described some of the effects they perceived the technical assistance to have had in their work. Comments also pointed to other sources of help and information which projects valued and felt were important in contributing to their increased capabilities. In addition to the Support System, projects cited other D/D, USOE personnel, other technical assistance contractors, and their own experience as having been helpful.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE STUDY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION BY USOE

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CONCLUSIONS FROM THE STUDY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION BY USOE

The purpose of this study was to examine two areas of general concern to USOE program personnel: the needs of D/D projects (as represented by the 21 Title I projects studied here) and the role of technical assistance in addressing D/D needs. In this section we will present our conclusions and recommendations for USOE program personnel responsible for managing and monitoring dissemination and technical assistance efforts.

THE NEEDS OF DEVELOPER-DEMONSTRATOR PROJECTS

1. *Developer-Demonstrator projects need knowledge and skill in dissemination strategies*

Since the National Diffusion Network is ostensibly a network of people set up for the purpose of disseminating successful programs this first conclusion may appear to be belaboring the obvious. Nevertheless, we believe it is one of the central conclusions of the study for it highlights the fact that a body of dissemination knowledge does exist and that most dissemination practitioners are gaining both knowledge and skill through experience and exposure to people who've had experience.

Funding projects that have developed exemplary programs for the instruction of children for dissemination appears to rest on the assumption that those projects can in fact operate as demonstration models from which adults can learn what is needed to replicate the program. The experience of the Title I Support System demonstrates that having an exemplary instructional program does not necessarily mean that a district has (or will be able to develop) a successful dissemination project. Specific help is needed in several areas related to the dissemination tasks the projects must perform including:

- developing materials
- making presentations

- determining adoption criteria
- assessing adopter needs
- negotiating with potential adopters
- providing training

This conclusion may also be substantiated by the number of workshop and self-help sessions that characterized NDN conferences -- selections that have ranged from negotiating adoption agreements to selecting a wardrobe.

Clearly there is a body of knowledge and a range of skills for program dissemination coming more and more into recognition and common usage.

We believe that USOE should continue to provide developer-demonstrator projects with access to knowledge and skills through technical assistance directed at improving dissemination practice.

2. *Developer-Demonstrator staff need a high level of motivation and a "dissemination attitude"*

Reflecting on the Title I Support System experience what appears to us to be on the horizon now is the expression of a *"dissemination attitude."* Knowledge and skill in dissemination are built upon assumptions about how change takes place. Successful Developer-Demonstrators, we predict, will be those whose staff are not only skilled, but those who value the assumptions about change that the skills reflect. One example from the Support System documentation should illustrate the point. There was one project that was particularly reluctant to receive technical assistance, and in general expressed a great deal of skepticism about the entire dissemination effort. The root of their concern appears to have been their belief that what made their project successful was something that could not be disseminated -- their teachers. The problems that this project faced were not amenable to solution through technical assistance because it was not knowledge or skill that was lacking, but motivation and a certain attitude about dissemination.

Dissemination professionals need to believe that programs are adoptable, that skills are transferable, and that somebody else can do what they have done or they end up being reluctant participants in a process they don't value. The study did not look specifically at the necessary attitudes of dissemination practitioners, but as with other human endeavors, there appears to be more to effective dissemination than skill and knowledge.

3. D/D projects need support for national dissemination from administrative personnel from the home district

A very frustrating and non-productive experience for a new D/D project occurs when there is a discrepancy between the Federal priorities the dissemination project needs to meet and the local priorities the project was developed to serve. The part-time dissemination coordinator who is also the district's Federal program officer and who is required to be away from the district for national travel faces conflicting priorities in very concrete terms, as does the dissemination coordinator who wishes to use district teachers to train adopting schools when district administrators want the teachers in the classrooms. The instances in which these problems grow into major problems are very few; however, the study suggests that a potential conflict exists for every D/D project facing a dissemination job that exceeds the available time and resources for accomplishing it.

Two recommendations for USOE are offered in this regard. First, in conjunction with strategies for orienting new projects (to be discussed later in this section), OE should consider bringing together key personnel from districts awarded D/D contracts for specific orientation and discussion about the goals of the National Diffusion Network and the role of the D/D in local program improvement. Along these same lines D/D project staff should be encouraged to bring their superintendent or other key administrators to at least one NDN wide conference to meet and interact with other D/Ds and other administrators from D/D districts. Such involvement could go a long way toward putting district personnel in touch with the realities of the national context within which the D/D personnel operate.

USOE should also take care to provide regular recognition to the school districts that house the D/D projects on behalf of their efforts in serving not just the children of their own district, but children all across the nation.

4. *D/D projects -- in particular, those new to national dissemination -- need specific, structured opportunities for orientation and integration into the National Diffusion Network*

In addition to serving as a technical resource for the projects it served, the Title I Support System acted as a socializing agent by explaining norms, rules, NDN history and key actors to new projects. The need for such an orientation and socializing resource was related in part to the complex and densely populated Title I dissemination strategy, but it may well be a need shared by all projects new to the NDN.

Despite the fact that the Title I projects were provided a special two and one half day Orientation Workshop at the outset of the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy, the study makes clear that some projects' needs for orienting information continued on into their first year of dissemination.

Our recommendation would be that USOE make special provisions for the orientation of projects new to the National Diffusion Network. Such orientation should not be viewed as a one-shot event, nor does it seem likely that orientation materials such as a handbook or introductory memo would be sufficient. Rather, we suggest that the orientation of new projects be viewed as a process that would be continuous throughout the first year of NDN operation. Ideally such a process would be implemented in conjunction with ongoing technical assistance and would include at minimum a workshop or series of workshops for new projects providing well designed opportunities for interaction among new and experienced projects as well as ample opportunity for asking questions and raising concerns.

New projects should also be assured access to a specifically identified agency or individual for answers to questions and concerns as they arise.

6. *D/D projects need a reasonable amount of time to plan and prepare for national dissemination before actually engaging in outreach activities*

The description of the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy and the demands it placed upon the projects amply demonstrates the constraints that some projects faced in trying to simultaneously plan and implement a dissemination effort. As with most any complex, long-term project, we assume that dissemination activities require time and effort to plan. We further assume that as with other activities, planning is an activity that ultimately improves the effectiveness of the effort.

USOE should consider ways of providing D/D projects with time and resources to develop dissemination goals and outline dissemination plans before they actually engage in dissemination activities. Among the alternatives USOE might consider would be the designation of a planning period for the initial phase of D/D funding. A minimum start-up phase might be three months; one year of planning and gear up would probably be a suitable maximum.

During this time D/D projects would have an opportunity to hire staff and work with technical assistance sources (if available) to set specific objectives and address critical needs such as developing documentation and formative evaluation procedures, building relationships with State Facilitators, getting oriented to the NDN and developing needed awareness and training materials.

While the Support System experience clearly demonstrates that some projects managed to get themselves up and running -- learning as they went -- in a scant six-eight weeks, we feel quite strongly that this is a nearly impossible situation to cope with and that USOE should provide more reasonable start-up time, if at all possible, in the planning and development of future dissemination strategies.

6. *Projects need information and assistance to insure that they realistically anticipate and plan for the time/energy demands that national dissemination activity requires*

This conclusion also grows out of the study's analysis of the demands which entry into national dissemination placed upon several of the Title I D/Ds. We do not know what kinds of information or priorities local districts use to project the staff needed for project dissemination, but we do know that many of the 21 projects served by the Title I Support System felt that their budgets could bear a full-time person. Several dissemination coordinators also indicated that before they began working to disseminate the project they had little idea how much time and energy it required; as a result many projects felt they were under-staffed for the dissemination job they had to do.

Among the recommendations USOE might consider would be requiring that projects have a full-time person attending to D/D functions. Following this course of action would in turn require that USOE provide projects with funding levels adequate to support one full-time professional. It may also be that were OE to provide new projects with an initial planning phase some of the burden of simultaneously preparing and operating experienced by the projects in this study would be eased to the point where a half-time or three-quarter time disseminator person would be sufficient.

7. *Projects need an opportunity to think through and define what it is they are offering for adoption and what their adoption procedures will be before engaging in full-scale dissemination*

A major premise underlying the use of program dissemination as a strategy for improving educational programs is that it is possible to define what goes on in an exemplary project in such a way that other people can be told or shown how to do it resulting in their also having an exemplary program.

One conclusion that can be drawn from this study, however, is that at minimum there are multiple ways of defining what the components of an

exemplary project are, and that, even if one can define them, there are often questions about whether and how they can be replicated that, ideally, ought to be considered before the program is disseminated. It appears that neither JDRP validation of a project's ability to produce significant student outcomes, nor the awarding of a D/D contract are sufficient events in and of themselves to guarantee that a project has gone through a conscious analysis of what it is they are doing, or more importantly perhaps, what it would take for somebody else to do it.

Providing D/D projects with an opportunity to analyze their operation, define the major elements or components of their program, and develop initial adoption procedures -- before coming face to face with potential adopters -- would be another reason for USOE to consider instituting a dissemination planning phase for D/D projects.

USOE might also consider having potential D/D projects show evidence in their proposals that they have attempted to identify the key features of the project or that they have a plan to carry out such analysis as part of a funded planning phase.

Finally USOE might consider making technical assistance available to those projects which, having passed the JDRP, express an interest in pursuing D/D funding. Such assistance would focus on helping the project more clearly define what it would be offering for adoption and by what means adopters would be helped to implement the project. Such assistance at this point in the project's life might also help project personnel to make more realistitic projections about the level of effort that the operation of a D/D project would require. At minimum, USOE could provide all JDRP validated projects with printed information concerning the need to identify essential project components and assess available time and staff before applying for D/D funding.

8. *Projects need information and straight answers concerning policies, regulations and "political realities" that may affect their dissemination efforts*

An important function of the technical assistance reported in this study was identification and clarification of issues and problems impinging on the projects from three sources:

- unclear or inconsistent messages/policies about what constitutes an adoption
- conflicting or differing definitions of what constitutes a legal Title I project from state to state and
- the clashing of state prerogatives (states can determine the regulations for their own Title I projects) and Federal priorities (exemplary Title I projects should be disseminated across state lines)

It appears to us that the need for this clarification procedure with the technical assistance staff acting as an intermediary to detect and articulate the confusion and seek clarification from OE was inevitable. It was not possible for USOE to predict all the contingencies and issues influencing the problems that arose, particularly given the experimental nature of the Title I dissemination strategy.

What was of critical significance, however, was the fact that the technical assistance agency accepted and capably played the role of intermediary and that USOE program personnel involved in the Title I/NDN dissemination effort were willing and able to acknowledge when policies were vague or incomplete or where state regulations and Federal guidelines were at odds and to work with the projects and the technical assistance agency to see what progress could be made.

All of this suggests two things to us. The first is that USOE program personnel involved in the development and implementation of dissemination strategies would do well to anticipate ahead of time whether the nature of the effort is such that state level regulations and priorities might be incompatible, if not plainly in conflict, with the goals of the strategy. The Title I strategy demonstrates that such inconsistencies need not be fatal

flaws in the effort; rather, such problems, if anticipated before they occur can be prepared for.

The second recommendation would be that USOE program personnel be willing, as needed to *"tell it like it is."* When policies are clear but operational implications are not, D/D projects need to know that -- particularly if they are new. When projects are new to dissemination and they encounter conflicting expectations or regulations that seem contradictory, the tendency is to assume that somebody (in OE) knows *"the answer"* but isn't telling them. From the Support System experience this past year it appears that D/D projects are better served by being told quite plainly when things are in a muddle and nobody knows what to do, than by being left to assume that nobody cares enough to tell them what they need to know.

9. D/D projects need to think about and plan their dissemination activities over a longer period than a year at a time

The 21 projects served by the Title I Support System began operation during the year in which USOE adopted a four-year funding limit for D/D projects. Given the experience of the Title I Support System working with some projects that had only one year's certain funding when they started, the adoption of a four year time frame for D/D activities is an important step to have taken. Our study leads us to suggest a further step in line with the four year life cycle.

We suggest that in place of the current RFP for D/D contracts that simply describes the activities a D/D must undertake USOE develop an RFP that would structure the D/D activities around several short-term and long-term task-related objectives for each year of the four year period. Whereas all D/D projects now have the same contractual scope of work whether they are in their first year of funding or their last, the RFP that we suggest would acknowledge that projects must of necessity function at different levels and address different objectives at different points in the course of their D/D funding.

In keeping with our previous recommendation we would suggest that all or most of the first year's activity would be directed at achieving several planning and start-up objectives. The second year of funding would be the first year of full D/D operation with the project actually conducting awareness sessions and selecting and training adopters. Year three would continue full operation but would also include the revision and refinement of procedures and the initiation of efforts to identify turn-key sites and plan for the maintenance of the D/D effort after the end of USOE funding. The fourth year would focus on the training and start-up of the turn-key site, continued work with adopters, and the full institutionalization of the D/D effort without Federal support (or the termination of the project if the district so decides).

Given an RFP that would structure the D/D's efforts in this way, USOE would have outcome objectives other than the number of adoptions upon which to assess the efforts of the D/D project. Such objectives for D/Ds would also provide a starting point for the technical assistance agency in working with the projects and might even provide the basis for USOE to assess the extent to which technical assistance was having an impact on the projects.

10. D/D projects -- especially those new to the NDN -- need access to technical assistance

From our study of the Title I Support System it appears that the technical assistance provided was an important means for helping the D/Ds prepare necessary dissemination resources and strategies on relatively short notice. The technical assistance also addressed project needs which, though they were not specifically task-related, were in areas that can significantly influence the capability of the D/D project to operate. That is, the Title I Support System provided the D/D projects with ready access to needed information; reassurance and human support for sticking with a difficult and, for many, unfamiliar venture; activities and strategies that helped the projects initiate and maintain communication with one another; access to resources and information about dissemination in a context larger than just

the NDN; assistance in clarifying concerns and identifying needs for assistance.

We have already recommended in the discussion above that USOE continue to provide D/Ds with access to technical assistance. In the remainder of this section we will present our conclusions concerning technical assistance as a source of help and support for D/D projects.

THE ROLE OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM

Just as our conclusions and recommendations concerning the needs of D/D projects are limited by the fact that they are based on an examination of 21 Title I projects, the majority of which were new to the NDN, our conclusions concerning technical assistance are based on a study of one agency's experience and approach. While we believe the approach to be a sound one, and while the study suggests that the assistance provided was valued and well received by the clients, the fact remains that the conclusions we present are based on a single effort. Having said that, we believe the technical assistance approach demonstrated by the Title I Support System suggests a number of features worthy of consideration in the development of other technical assistance efforts.

1. Technical assistance should not be limited to addressing task related needs

As the study makes clear, the D/Ds needed and got help in a variety of areas that went beyond the bounds of producing brochures or developing a training design. We would suggest that for future technical assistance USOE consider the fact that helping projects find ways to interact with each other, helping them learn who's who and who does what, providing them with encouragement, and being available to answer *"silly"* questions are important aspects of support that help create the context within which the technical resources can be most productively used.

2. *Technical assistance can be provided in many different forms*

The Support System experience clearly suggests that there are many different modes of providing service to clients. In particular the study suggests that the relatively costly service of sending consultants on-site to work with clients need not be the only, or even the primary means of providing assistance.

In cases where a working relationship has been established between a member of the technical assistance staff and the client, the telephone can provide easy access to help with several different kinds of problems.

Similarly, the Support System experience suggests that a technical assistance system would do well to look for ways of building on existing events and activities as a means of providing clients with *"low energy access"* to help, rather than assuming that technical assistance must require the arrangement of on-site visits or separate workshops.

Economies of time and money can be realized by a technical assistance system with the flexibility to provide services in different forms at different times, and with the skill to know when to use and how to manage a variety of service modes.

3. *It is important for the technical assistance staff to have knowledge of the requirements for the client group as those requirements relate to the context within which the clients must function*

Technical assistance as it was studied here turns out to be a blend of technical resource provision, role socialization, and community building. In order to provide such assistance the technical assistance agency had to be thoroughly versed in the task requirements of the clients, know the objectives of the Title I/NDN dissemination strategy, know the special contractual requirements of the various projects, know something of the history and structure (both formal and informal) of the NDN, know the climate of

the district within which the client project was housed, and finally, know the specific clients -- the individual men and women whose work the assistance was directed at helping.

To the extent that other technical assistance efforts might look beyond the provision of purely technical resources to helping clients clarify their roles and build relationships with their peers, such efforts will need to have, or find ways to get, the kinds of information which enable a technical assistance agency to provide those other kinds of support.

4. It is important for the technical assistance staff to develop relationships with the clients they are trying to serve

The description of the Title I Support System in the study made it clear that the development of supportive personal relationships between the technical assistance agency and the clients was part of the project's approach from the outset. However, the study also points to aspects of the context within which the Support System clients were operating which made the development of those relationships important.

The demands and expectations operating on the projects were extremely high, both in terms of quantity and relative to their general level of experience at the time they were funded. Two observations about the function of relationship building are, therefore, important: First, the technical assistance was effective in part because great emphasis was placed on building relationships with the clients within which the demands on them could be articulated and support rendered.

Second, the potential for discouragement and dissatisfaction among the client projects was very high as they became familiar with the difficult nature of the demands the dissemination strategy was placing upon them. A supportive, known, and readily accessible technical assistance staff proved vital in addressing the problems created by the situation.

5. *The attitudes of the technical assistance staff toward the clients they serve are important*

Just as we think we have seen the emergence of a certain *"dissemination attitude"* among successful D/Ds we believe that there is in the experience of the Title I Support System the emergence of a positive technical assistance attitude. We characterize the attitude as one which is supportive, friendly and focused on finding ways to help the client do a better job. This attitude may be contrasted with a pathological attitude which focuses on technical assistance as an activity aimed at moving clients from incompetence to competence. The positive technical assistance attitude we detect views technical assistance as an activity that provides the client with help defining the requirements to be met, identifying resources that can be used, and using them to best advantage.

Relating to the concept of a positive technical assistance attitude is the concept of professional distance. Developing relationships with clients based on an attitude that is supportive and helpful may be conducive to over-identification with the client: there is a temptation to romanticize the client's efforts rather than to treat them matter-of-factly.

Without the maintenance of professional distance, the technical assistant may try to protect the client from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, rather than viewing those slings and arrows as an inevitable part of participating in a new venture. Professional distance allows the technical assistant to develop a warm and supportive relationship with a client and, at the same time, encourage the client to carry on despite frustration and ambiguity.

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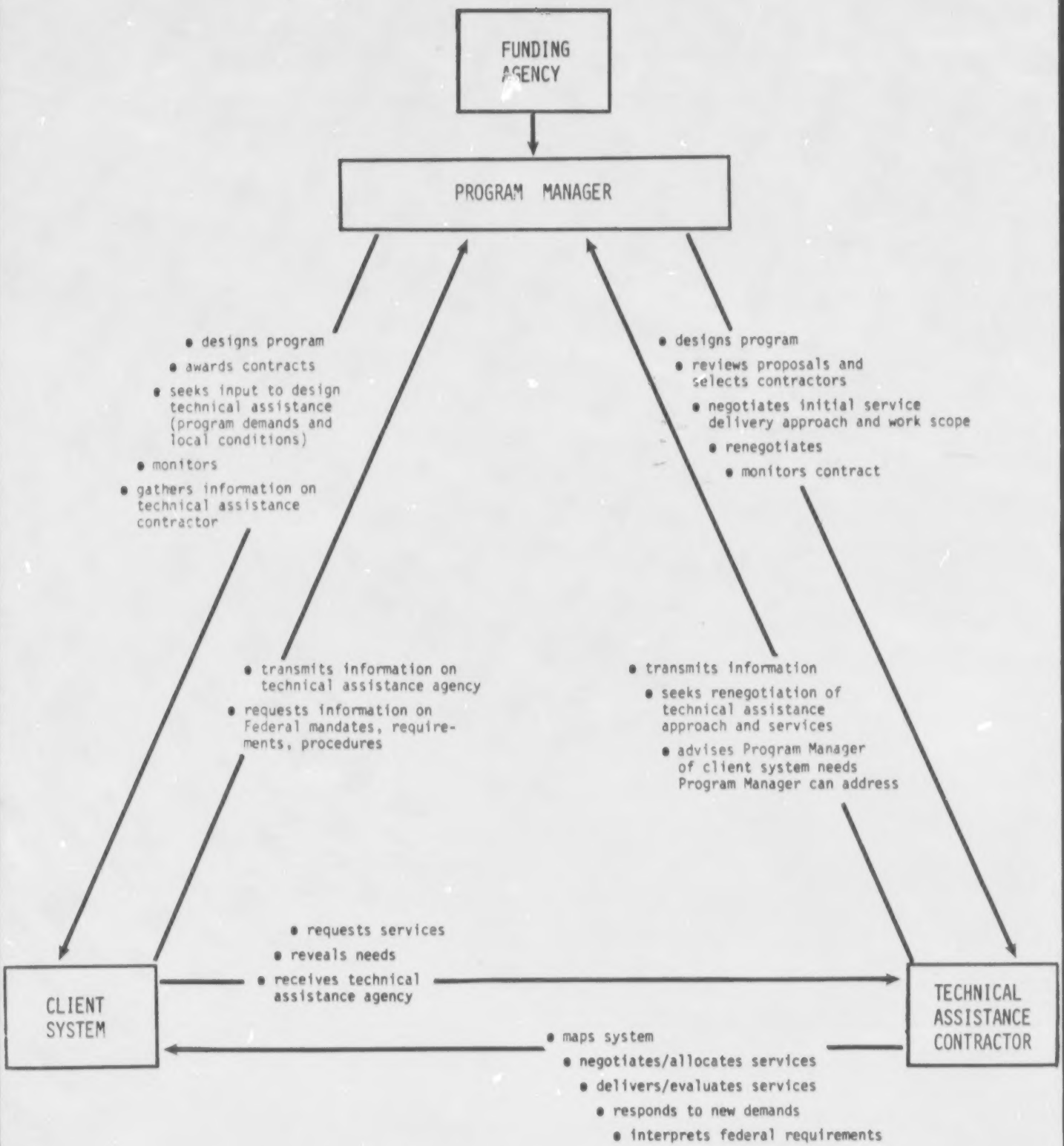
6. *It is important for the technical assistance staff to have a collaborative relationship with program personnel in the funding agency*

There is evidence in the study that frequent communication between the Support System Project Director and the program office in USOE fostered a trusting relationship in which both became increasingly sensitized to the other's information: the Project Director to the demands and hopes of the funding agency; the OE Program Officer to the nature and needs of the client system. It seems clear that the impact of the demands on the client projects -- from their local settings, from adopters, from guidelines and policies, and from reality constraints -- could not have been accurately predicted in advance and that the highly communicative and supportive relationship which developed between the technical assistance agency and USOE personnel served to refine the technical assistance approach and support the transmission of important information and interpretation from USOE staff to the clients.

The technical assistant neither acted as an advocate for the clients against the Federal government, nor as an apologist for the government to the clients.

As a result of the technical assistance agency-funding agency relationship developed in the Support System experience, we have conceived of a triangular interactive relationship model with complementary roles for the client system, the technical assistance agency, and the funding agency. The model is depicted in the following diagram.


FUNDING AGENCY
PROGRAM MANAGER
• designs program
• awards contracts
• seeks input to design technical assistance (program demands and local conditions)
• monitors
• gathers information on technical assistance contractor
• designs program
• reviews proposals and selects contractors
• negotiates initial service delivery approach and work scope
• renegotiates
• monitors contract
• transmits information on technical assistance agency
• requests information on Federal mandates, requirements, procedures
• transmits information
• seeks renegotiation of technical assistance approach and services
• advises Program Manager of client system needs Program Manager can address
• requests services
• reveals needs
• receives technical assistance agency
CLIENT SYSTEM
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONTRACTOR
• maps system
• negotiates/allocates services
• delivers/evaluates services
• responds to new demands
• interprets federal requirements

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The model suggests a way in which the technical assistance agency can act both as a technical resource for the clients and at the same time serve to identify problems and concerns in the client system which the funding agency should appropriately address. It also suggests a role for Federal program personnel that involves their functioning in a problem-solving role vis-a-vis the clients with the aid of the technical assistance agency. Finally, the model suggests that the relationship between the Federal program personnel and the client system can be an important source of information about the kind of technical assistance needed and the extent to which current services are meeting client needs.

CHAPTER SIX

QUESTIONS RAISED BY THIS STUDY

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As is the case with most inquiring efforts, this study leaves some questions unanswered and raises others in the course of addressing the ones it does answer. Among the unanswered questions are the following:

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TITLE I DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

How effective was the Title I/NDN strategy?

The study notes that despite some conflicting or unclear directions from USOE, many of the projects reported that their participation in the Title Idissemination strategy contributed to an increase in their ability to *secure adoptions*. However, it was beyond the scope of the present study to compare the extent to which adoptions secured during the projects' participation in the strategy surpassed those achieved in previous years without benefit of the special strategy.

As of June, 1978 it appeared that the 21 projects had met the stated adoption goal of 300 in that more than 400 districts had signed agreements to adopt one of the projects. To the extent that effectiveness is considered to be synonymous with securing commitments to adopt then the strategy appears to have been effective. However, other definitions of effectiveness such as successful implementation by adopters, persisting use of the adopted project, or satisfaction of the users should all be examined over time before accurate pronouncements concerning the strategy's effectiveness can be made.

To what extent would other "sub-networks" encounter obstacles related to varying state-level regulations (such as those described in this study) in attempts to disseminate "categorical" projects across state lines?

An important finding about the use of the sub-network strategy for disseminating projects developed within *categorical* state-administered programs such as Title I is that the goals of the program at the federal level may not be compatible with the realities of the program at the state level. The study makes it clear that within the Title I/NDN dissemination effort some way of accommodating to state-level regulations must be found. Two unanswered questions are whether the same kinds of regulatory variations exist in other programs (e.g. Follow Through, bilingual education) for which USOE might mount sub-network dissemination strategies in the future; and whether there is action that can or should be taken at the policy level to insure that a goal set at the federal level (dissemination of projects across state lines) is not in conflict with state regulations governing the operation of such projects.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Although the study looks closely at the needs of one set of clients, the amount, modes and content of service provided, and the clients' perceptions about the effects and utility of the services received, there are some important questions about technical assistance that remain for future consideration.

Upon what criteria should the effectiveness of technical assistance services be measured?

There is a growing tendency in education and in other human service fields (supported by a growing desire to limit spending) to assess the effectiveness of funded programs in terms of measurable outcomes. Thus, D/D projects must not only show quality in the adoptions they produce, but they must show adoptions in quantity. When looking at the provision of technical assistance and support for demonstration projects there is a similar tendency to assess the effectiveness of the service by looking for evidence that is quantifiable. The question then becomes: By what quantifiable measure might one assess the effectiveness of technical assistance? Two

possiblities that we've heard considered are: 1) The effectiveness of technical assistance for D/D projects can be measured by the extent to which the clients achieve both quantity and quality of adoptions. 2) A technical assistance agency can be evaluated by looking at how much service it is providing: the more documented instances of assistance rendered, the more effective the agency.

Both of these possible evaluative standards have problems that make them unacceptable or unworkable, or both. Evaluating technical assistance by looking at how well the clients produce might be a reasonable way of proceeding if the outcomes of the client's work were such that a cause and effect relationship could be clearly established between what the client does (and how well) and the provision of technical assistance. As the study clearly demonstrates, however, there are myriad factors that operate in the context within which technical assistance (in this case defined as one human being trying to help another) is provided. These factors greatly influence the extent to which technical assistance can have an impact on the client and the client's work, but they are factors over which the technical assistance agency can have little or no control. Thus, it makes very little sense, for example, to conclude that technical assistance was not effective because a D/D project that received four on-site visits, many hours of telephone consultations, and several kinds of resource materials ended up the year without having achieved any program adoptions.

On the other hand, it would be equally senseless to conclude simply on the basis of the sheer number of transactions completed that the assistance provided that same project had been effective.

Trying to assess the effectiveness of a D/D's operation by looking at the achievement of students in sites where the program has been adopted presents the same problems. There are far too many variables operating in the adopter situation over which the D/D cannot (and some would say should not) have control, to consider trying to show a cause and effect

relationship between what the D/D did and how well the kids in the new site are doing. It also makes little sense to conclude that a project claiming 200 adoptions each year is operating effectively.

The present study demonstrates that the Support System clients rated the assistance they received highly, and that they further believed the assistance had had an effect in their work and in their understanding of their work. The study also suggests that the technical assistance agency was effective in meeting its own implicit objective of acting to insure that the clients' needs were identified and that help was provided to meet them. The technical assistance project clearly did what it said it would do; the clients clearly felt satisfied, and more important helped by the services they got. This is not quantifiable, statistically reliable evidence of effectiveness; but at this point, for this kind of service it may be the best one can do.

While the issue of how to evaluate the effectiveness of activities that are, at bottom human interactions, will not soon be answered, our suggestion would be that all parties would be best served by clearly stating at the outset the purposes that their service is intended to address, and by looking along the way and at the end to see whether those stated purposes are being met to the satisfaction both of the client and the service provider. In that instance then, only technical assistance agencies whose espoused purpose was to help D/D projects *get adoptions* would be evaluated on having achieved that goal; and only those D/D projects that state as their purpose the achievement of adoptions in numbers would have to prove that they had succeeded in those terms.

What technical assistance modes are most effective?

The study provides ample data to demonstrate that in most cases the Support System clients found the services provided useful in meeting their needs. Audiences who want or need *harder* evidence of effectiveness will not find that in this study. Further, information about whether one form

of technical assistance is more effective in any absolute sense than another form must await the conduct of a different kind of study.

What this study does suggest is that it is important to make technical assistance available in a variety of different modes to meet different needs and that activities directed at the development of a network along the client projects can be an important source of assistance.

How much does technical assistance cost?

As with information about effectiveness, data concerning costs can only be meaningful in a comparative analysis. The most that a cost analysis of the Support System could provide would be an answer to the question *"How much might it cost the same agency to provide the same kinds of services to the same clients at the same level of effort?"*

It seems clear, however, that the cost of technical assistance depends on the nature of the service provided, the nature of the agency providing the service, and the conditions under which it is provided. Future studies directed at a comparative analysis of different technical assistance approaches might do well to conduct a cross-cost study to determine what costs are associated with each approach, and what factors appear to be important in determining the costs of providing technical assistance.

We are <u>not</u> suggesting that a cost-benefit study be undertaken since such studies could only crudely -- if at all -- take into account the merit and quality of various technical assistance methods and approaches.

What kind of people/agencies can best provide technical assistance?

Again, the study seems to show that the Title I Support System was effective in providing technical assistance consistent with its own approach. If future efforts were to address more fully problems of how to

assess the effectiveness of support service delivery and how to evaluate the merits of one approach by comparison with another, then perhaps clearer indications would be available as to what kinds of people/agencies can best provide technical assistance.

QUESTIONS ABOUT DEVELOPER/DEMONSTRATOR PROJECTS

Do projects other than new D/Ds or D/Ds with new staff need or benefit from technical assistance?

Although all 21 clients received services from the Support System the study seems to show that new projects and new staff on established projects need and use more technical assistance than experienced established projects. It would be useful to determine whether the categories of need identified here are relevant to other NDN D/D projects.

What is an optimal level of funding for D/Ds?

While the study makes clear the difficulties encountered by projects attempting to participate in national dissemination without benefit of any D/D funding, the question of what an optimal level of funding would be remains unanswered. As suggested in the conclusions minimal funding might reasonably include support for both a planning phase and the salary for a full-time disseminator.

What are the effects of a project's D/D operation on the day to day operations of the home district?

One important issue for future consideration suggested by the present study is the fact that in becoming a D/D a school district takes on a new and very different role vis-a-vis other school districts -- one that may affect the conduct of *business as usual* within the D/D district's schools. To the extent that exemplary programs developed by

local schools continue to be viewed as a major resource for improving the programs of other schools, it will become increasingly important to know and understand the effects that accepting the D/D role have upon the district who plays it.

What should the D/D disseminate?

As the study's description of the demands operating on D/D projects makes clear, there were conflicting implicit and explicit directions about what the projects were funded to disseminate. The existence of these conflicting requirements raises some questions worthy of consideration in the development of future dissemination policy and the funding of future research.

- Can we learn more about what project personnel in exemplary sites do when they replicate their own program from year to year or instructional cycle to instructional cycle? Do they, in fact, use the same strategies, approaches, materials time and again or do they modify, refine, adapt as they go? And if they do, what does such behavior suggest about what can or should be happening when projects are adopted in new sites?

- Should whole project replication continue to be the goal of NDN dissemination?

- Are there other positive outcomes resulting in sites where significant adaptation of an adopted project has occurred that might support a more relaxed attitude toward adaptation v. adoption?

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APPENDIX A: *Forms used by the Title I Support System for Needs Assessment and Technical Assistance Planning*

DIAGNOSTIC CHECKLIST

This checklist indicates your perception of your project's strengths and weaknesses regarding diffusion. Your thoughtful completion of this portion of the feedback instrument will facilitate our overall assessment of continuing technical assistance needs and provide you with a discussion focus when reporting back to your home site.

In the first column, check each activity -- including those you have added -- which your project is presently engaged in or capable of performing. In the second column, check the activities which your project intends to engage in, but could use additional technical assistance. In the third column, indicate the activities which do not fit your intended diffusion effort.

DIFFUSION ACTIVITIES:	Presently engaged in or capable of	Additional technical assistance would be useful	Not a part of our diffusion effort
1. *Developing, using, and evaluating an overall diffusion plan which includes objectives, budget planning, an activities timeline, staff assignments, and plans for identifying local and other funds and resources to extend diffusion project salaries, travel, and materials.*	☐	☐	☐
2. *Identifying appropriate target audiences for your project.*	☐	☐	☐
3. *Creating or redesigning awareness materials such as brochures, news releases, in-depth descriptions, and audio-visual presentations.*	☐	☐	☐
4. *Redesigning or adapting various project components to enhance their replicability in adopter sites.*	☐	☐	☐
5. *Conducting awareness sessions for a variety of audiences at the local, state, and regional levels.*	☐	☐	☐
6. *Rearranging your schedules, facilities, and staff to function as a demonstration site providing an optimal experience for visiting educators while minimally disrupting the students' learning environment.*	☐	☐	☐
7. *Negotiating your involvement with potential adopters and setting mutual expectations.*	☐	☐	☐

DIFFUSION ACTIVITIES:	Presently engaged in or capable of	Additional technical assistance would be useful	Not a part of our diffusion effort
8. Performing organizational diagnoses of adopting school systems in order to identify key personnel and subgroups and eventually obtain their commitment.	☐	☐	☐
9. Confirming availability and suitability of needed facilities, resources, materials, and staff at the adoption site.	☐	☐	☐
10. Planning and conducting project-focused training sessions designed to meet the needs of participating school personnel.	☐	☐	☐
11. Conducting an analysis of project materials and procedures to determine the degree and direction of their adaptability to meet local needs and constraints.	☐	☐	☐
12. Helping to install the program on a trial or pilot basis, and, in some cases, conducting an evaluation of the trial adoption's effectiveness.	☐	☐	☐
13. Creating an implementation plan for use by the local adopter which includes objectives, activities, staff assignments, budget control, and a timeline.	☐	☐	☐
14. Developing support mechanisms within the school to complement the new program.	☐	☐	☐
15. Developing documentation and evaluation procedures for your own diffusion activities.	☐	☐	☐
16. Planning and conducting follow-up technical assistance to local school systems.	☐	☐	☐
17. Building and maintaining effective working relationships with adopter sites, state education agencies, state facilitators, and the National Diffusion Network.	☐	☐	☐

18. Additional comments?

_____

_____

_____

DIFFUSION SUMMARY OF MY PROJECT

After reviewing the checklist:

As a project, we seem to be strongest in the following general area(s):

Given my own interests and experience, I could possibly do more in the following area(s):

Our project needs to place more emphasis on the following area(s):

I would like some specific help (ideas, resources, information) in the following area(s):

This assessment has raised the following additional questions for me:

PROJECT SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Instructions.. Under each of the following diffusion related activities, please write a concise statement of your project's capability to complete that activity. If you feel that a particular activity describes a capability of special concern to your project, please circle the number of that activity.

1. Identifying specific target audiences for your project.

2. Creating awareness materials such as brochures, news releases, indepth descriptions and audio-visual presentations.

3. Mailing awareness materials to specified target audiences.

4. Conducting awareness sessions at local, state and regional gatherings.

5. Developing or adapting various project components so that they are as amenable to dissemination as possible without reducing their original intent.

6. Distributing project products with a user evaluation form.

7. Arranging and conducting visits to the project site.

8. Identifying participating schools or adopters and the subgroups in those organizations most likely to react favorably or unfavorably to the project.

9. Conducting a needs assessment at potential adopter sites.

10. Negotiating your involvement and mutual expectations.

11. Designing a preliminary implementation plan.

12. Obtaining commitment from key personnel.

13. Confirming availability and suitability of needed facilities, resources, materials and staff at the adoption site.

14. Planning and conducting training sessions designed to meet the needs of the identified school personnel.

15. Working with school personnel to adapt project materials and procedures for local use.

16. Helping to install the program on a trial or pilot basis.

17. Conducting an evaluation of the trial adoption's effectiveness.

18. Creating an implementation plan which includes objectives, activities, staff assignments, budget control and a timeline.

19. Developing support mechanisms within the school to complement the new program.

20. developing documentation and evaluation procedures.

21. Planning and conducting follow-up technical assistance.

22. Anticipating future training needs.

23. Building and maintaining effective working relationships with adopter sites, state education agencies, state facilitators and the National Diffusion Network.

26. Developing, Using and Evaluating a Diffusion Plan which includes objectives, budget planning , an activities timeline, staff assignments, and plans for identifying local and other funds and resources to extend diffusion project salaries, travel and materials.

PROJECT NAME:

YOUR NAME:

PIP PROJECT DISSEMINATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Below are listed the Tasks and activities outlined in the Work Statement for the PIP Project Disseminators. Please review the list and indicate for each item whether your project has completed planning for the activity, is currently engaged in the activity, and whether technical assistance would be helpful in regard to the activity.

This information will be used to plan the agenda for the second PIP Disseminators Technical Assistance Workshop.

	ACTIVITY PLANNED	*ACTIVITY UNDERWAY*	*TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WOULD BE HELPF*
TASK 1: ACQUIRE NECESSARY BACKGROUND INFORMATION			
A. About PIP materials	( )	( )	( )
B. About strategies and experiences of PIP Diffusion Contractors	( )	( )	( )
C. About diffusion strategies of NDN D/Ds and operations of the NDN in general	( )	( )	( )
D. Attend 3 technical assistance workshops for PIP Disseminators	( )	( )	( )

Comments regarding this task, if any:

TASK 2: CREATE AWARENESS AND DEVELOP INTEREST IN THE PIP PROJECT			
A. Develop strategies for using the ASK and other PIP materials to create awareness	( )	( )	( )
B. Develop additional awareness materials as needed	( )	( )	( )
C. Contact State Facilitators and provide information regarding PIP project	( )	( )	( )
D. Conduct presentations at five Regional Awareness Conferences	( )	( )	( )
E. Make presentations at SF-sponsored conferences (as project resources permit)	( )	( )	( )
F. Develop and implement a system for responding to phone and mail requests from interested school districts	( )	( )	( )

	ACTIVITY PLANNED	ACTIVITY UNDERWAY	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WOULD BE HELPFU

Comments regarding this task, if any:

TASK 3: PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT THE ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

A. Establish and implement a visitation policy for visits to your site	( )	( )	( )
B. Determine strategies and provide information about policies regarding:			
adaptation limitations	( )	( )	( )
adopter obligations	( )	( )	( )
training capability	( )	( )	( )
training requirements	( )	( )	( )
follow-up services	( )	( )	( )
adopter evaluation requirements	( )	( )	( )
C. Design Adoption Contract	( )	( )	( )
D. Provide pre-decision workshops (as project resources permit)	( )	( )	( )
E. Design and provide training	( )	( )	( )
F. Provide implementation assistance	( )	( )	( )

Comments regarding this task, if any:

TASK 4: ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

A. Design and maintain a communications log	( )	( )	( )
B. Analyze project progress and prepare written progress reports in conjunction with three review meetings with USOE	( )	( )	( )
Attend and make presentation at three review meetings with USOE	( )	( )	( )
Design and maintain system for tracking identity and number of adopters and numbers of students impacted	( )	( )	( )
C. Participate in two NDN conferences	( )	( )	( )

Comments regarding this task, if any:

Please list any questions or issues of concern your project faces regarding each of its major objectives as a PIP Project Disseminator (as described in the Work Statement issued by OPBE):

1. To work cooperatively with State Facilitators in the NDN to make PIPs available to school districts across the country

2. To insure that the PIP project is effectively installed in a large number of school districts across the country

3. To encourage the appropriate use of the PIP materials by project adopters during planning and installation

4. To provide any personal assistance that may be required by adopting districts in reaching a decision to adopt and implement the project

SUPPORT SYSTEM PLANNING GUIDE

Please fill out this page before the T.A. planning phone call.

Project _____

NETstaff _____

Data Sources

On File		Used for This Report
_____	Project Proposal	_____
_____	JDRP Submission	_____
_____	Project Materials	_____
_____	Completed Needs Assessment	_____

Note below your assessment of problem areas for the project. The list should include items reflecting potential problems (i.e., the project director is only part-time) as well as questions you want further information on (i.e., are there visit schedules and procedures? do they have access to and/or funds for consultant assistance?).

TELEPHONE NEEDS ASSESSMENT -- SUPPORT SYSTEM PLANNING GUIDE

A. Review project work scope

B. Identify 2-3 priority project goals

C. Review major (any) dissemination activities and problems to date

D. Identify major problems facing project in next month, six months

E. Determine specific answers to the following:

1. How are project management processes going -- are goals and activities (especially related to dissemination) clear to staff? Are skills of staff adequate for upcoming jobs?

2. What is status of project's training design/plan?

3. Dissemination plan?

4. Product development plans?

5. Other?

While on the phone, the yellow Needs Assessment Summary Sheet might help organize and clarify your discussion.

Question or Concern	Related Data Source(s)

Problem Area #1

Current Situation

Desired Situation

Short term assistance plan (indicate activities, delivery modes, and decision rules)

Long term assistance plan (indicate activities, delivery modes, and decision rules)

Problem Area #2

Current Situation

Desired Situation

Short term assistance plan (indicate activities, delivery modes, and decision rules)

Long term assistance plan (indicate activities, delivery modes, and decision rules)

Problem Area #3

Current Situation

Desired Situation

Short term assistance plan (indicate activities, delivery modes, and decision rules)

Long term assistance plan (indicate activities, delivery modes, and decision rules)

Problem Area #4

Current Situation

Desired Situation

Short term assistance plan (indicate activities, delivery modes, and decision rules)

Long term assistance plan (indicate activities, delivery modes, and decision rules)

Note any special requests, etc., for services made by the project.

Additional Comments:

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

	PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	DELIVERY MODE	COMMENTS:
____	Program Evaluation Design	_____	
____	Data analysis	_____	
____	Disseminating evaluation results	_____	
____	Internal decision making	_____	
____	Organizational diagnosis	_____	
____	Relationships with LEA	_____	
____	Program planning	_____	
____	Staffing: roles and functions	_____	
____	Management structure: allocation of time, responsibilities, reporting relationships	_____	
____	Conflict resolution among staff	_____	
____	Advisory Board	_____	
____	Other _____	_____	
	_____		
	_____		

DELIVERY MODES KEY

C-L -- Inter-project communication linkage
OV-C -- On-site Visit - Consultant
OV -- On-site Visit - Support Service Staff
TC-C -- Telephone Consultation - Conference call
TC -- Telephone Consultation
In-S -- Information services; Search
In-T -- Information services; Telephone consultation
N -- Newsletter article
W -- White paper topic

	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	DELIVERY MODE	COMMENTS:
___	Assessment of staff competencies	_____	
___	Staff development program planning	_____	
___	Staff development in training	_____	
___	Other _____	_____	
	_____		

	SERVICES TO STUDENTS	
___	Assessment procedures and instruments	_____
___	Delivery system	_____
___	Instructional materials	_____
___	Monitoring and evaluation student progress	_____
___	Communicating with regular classroom teacher	_____
___	Individualized educational planning/ programming	_____
___	Parent involvement	_____
___	Other _____	_____
	_____	

DELIVERY MODES KEY

C-L -- Inter-project communication linkage
OV-C -- On-site Visit - Consultant
OV -- On-site Visit - Support Service Staff
TC-C -- Telephone Consultation - Conference call
TC -- Telephone Consultation
In-S -- Information services; Search
In-T -- Information services; Telephone consultation
N -- Newsletter article
W -- White paper topic

	TRAINING	DELIVERY MODE	COMMENTS:
___	Designing training programs	_____	
___	Developing training materials	_____	
___	Other _____	_____	
	_____		
	DIFFUSION/DISSEMINATION		
___	Identifying targets for diffusion/ dissemination	_____	
___	Designing diffusion/dissemination strategies	_____	
___	Developing adoption procedures and commitment	_____	
___	Defining implementation procedures	_____	
___	Other _____	_____	
	_____		
	PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT		
___	Identifying products	_____	
___	Product creation	_____	
___	Product validation	_____	
___	Other _____	_____	
	_____		

DELIVERY MODES KEY

C-L -- Inter-project communication linkage
OV-C -- On-site Visit - Consultant
OV -- On-site Visit - Support Service Staff
TC-C -- Telephone Consultation - Conference call
TC -- Telephone Consultation
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N -- Newsletter article
W -- White paper topic

APPENDIX B: *Samples from Title I Support System Project Documentation*

1. *Excerpt from Technical Assitance Log*
2. *On-site visit Contact Report, January 1977*
3. *On-site visit Contact Report, November 1978*
4. *Telephone Contact Report, April 1978*
5. *Telephone Contact Report, April 1978*
6. *Telephone Contact Report, May 1978*
7. *Correspondence related to Consultation, March 1978*

Note: Names have been removed from contact reports and correspondence to protect anonymity and confidentiality.

TITLE I SUPPORT SYSTEM

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUEST LOG

DATE	PROJECT	REQUEST	RESPONSE
October '77	IRIT	Request for on-site visit to prepare for Reg. Conferences	Peter G. made on-site visit 10/19/77
October '77	IRIT	Request for assistance in preparing awareness brochure	NETWORK (J. Shaffer) hired graphics/writers, produced brochure
October '77	Seaport	Request for on-site visit to prepare for Reg. Conferences	Marty Williams made visit 10/19/77
October '77	Seaport	Request for assistance in preparing A/V materials	November '77: audio tape and transparencies series prepared by consultants hired by The NETWORK
October '77	CHILD	Request for on-site visit to prepare for Reg. Conferences	10/21/77 visit by Nancy Taylor
October '77	CHILD	Request for assistance in producing awareness brochure	November '77: brochure produced by consultants hired by NETWORK
October '77	NOMAD	Request for assistance in preparing for Reg. Awareness Conferences	Visit by Jon Kaiser 10/21/77
October '77	PREDICT I	Request for assistance in preparing for Reg. Awareness Conferences	Visit by Leslie Hergert 10/25/77
October '77	PREDICT I	Request for assistance in writing/designing brochures	Brochure designed by consultan hired by The NETWORK
October '77	Title I Reading Center, Florida	Request for on-site assistance to prepare for Reg. Awareness Conferences	Visit by Marian Grogan 10/27/7
October '77	Florida Migrant Language Arts Tutorial Program	Request for on-site assistance to prepare for Reg. Awareness Conferences	Visit by Marian Grogan 10/28/7
October '77	Training Migrant Paraprofessionals	Request for on-site assistance to prepare for Reg. Awareness Conferences	Visit by Sue Shoemaker; overhe transparencies created; infor-mation package mailed 10/27-29

TITLE I SUPPORT SYSTEM

ON-SITE VISIT CONTACT REPORT

PROJECT: _____
STAFF: Leslie Hergert
DATE: 18 January 1977
PURPOSE OF VISIT: To help plan project's training design
STAFF MET: _____
(met briefly office staff, teachers, aides)

Description of Visit:

_____and I spent the day from 8:30 to 4:00 (the last hour in the car to the airport) working on her training design. She had used the planning worksheet I sent her and planned a 3-day workshop. We spent the first hour-and-a-half reviewing her plan and the rest of the day revising specific pieces. _____had asked for help in identifying materials needed for each segment and we did that as we went along.

The original plan was good in terms of comprehensiveness of topics covered and variety of teaching methods used, but was weak on learner participation and purpose of activities. After we'd reviewed the plan, I asked Marcelyn to translate the topics into objectives. What does the adopter need in order to replicate the project, to know certain information, to hold certain beliefs, to be able to do certain things? She was able to do this and we used the objectives to look at each topic.

Her Sunday evening session needed the most work. Participants had a tour of classrooms, then dinner, then two hours of basically lecture (lecture and a case study of a child by a teacher). I talked about the need to have more initial interaction and find out more about the group and their initial questions and concerns. We kept the basic pieces she had, moved some things around and added a session to get out their "top of the head" questions and a review of the agenda to indicate where questions would be answered.

_____was both responsive to changes and participative in generating alternatives -- a nice combination. She responded well to my focusing questions and found that a helpful way to work. We added some discussion sessions here and there, designed observation worksheets and planning worksheets, and planned a role play. Quite a productive day, I believe! _____will send a typed copy of the plan next week.

_____seemed genuinely pleased with the help she got from me and with the Support System in general. "one of the great things about this has been that

I've never felt out on a limb. Every time a new issue comes up for me to worry about, someone is right there to help me". She also said she has been extremely impressed with NETWORK staff and their ability to anticipate needs and meet them. At one point we were discussing adult education and training designs and she said she knew that we were all modeling a good adult education approach in the meetings and she has found it educational to pay attention to the way debriefing sessions have been structured even back to Dennis's New Orleans workshop. An enthusiastic and truly satisfied client who is willing to identify her own areas of need and work with us to meet them!

Next Steps:

_____has talked with Susan about getting help in planning for next year. She needs to seriously think through her own time and work commitments. She is half time on the dissemination project but her school job (both directing the project and working with kids) hasn't been changed. She sent via me to Susan her proposal from last year.

TITLE I SUPPORT SYSTEM

ON-SITE VISIT CONTACT REPORT

TO: Susan Harris
FROM: Jack Ford
RE: On-site Consultation with_____ .
_____Program
DATE: 7 November 1978

I. *PURPOSE OF VISIT*

The visit originated as a result of the program recently being funded as a D/D. _____requested assistance to clarify the description of the project for adopters and to plan the development of materials for dissemination.

II. *PRE-PLANNING*

Prior to the visit, I talked with _____ about the issues that would be addressed. We tentatively agreed to focus on the following issues for the visit:

1. Clarification of goals and strategies of a D/D
2. Clarification of relationship between two states in performing D/D tasks
3. Review of present materials to determine if they are useful in performing the D/D functions
4. Assess the need for additional materials
5. Plan for the development of new materials.

III. *PROJECT STAFF INVOLVED*

1. _____, Project Coordinator
2. _____, Project Coordinator

IV. *DESCRIPTION OF VISIT*

October 31

9:00 - 10:30 I met with_____ and _____ to discuss the project in general and to identify specific outcomes for the visit. I began this meeting by reviewing the purpose of the visit and sharing the issues that had been identified in my previous phone conversation with____. I was careful about sharing these

issues because I was uncertain about _____'s investment in these issues and his support for my assistance. It quickly became apparent that he was open to the assistance and we identified the following specific outcomes for the two days:

1. Clarify the Definition of Project
   -- components
   -- services
   -- operation

2. Critique the Present Materials

3. Develop a graphic display of the program

4. Identify the materials needed for dissemination

5. Develop an Adoption Agreement.

10:30 - 12:30 _____, _____, and I worked to develop a definition of the Project and goals for the Project. Much of this discussion involved clarifying the roles of _____ and _____ and identifying goals that reflected the total project. This discussion was particularly useful in helping _____ and _____ to develop their own job descriptions and to identify areas where they need to work collaboratively.

1:30 - 4:30 I worked with _____ and _____ to identify the components of their program, to develop a step by step description of how the program works, and to identify the kinds of services that they can provide to adopting sites.

November 1

8:30 - 10:30 We began the second day by reviewing what had been accomplished thus far and planning for the second day. We decided to focus first on the critique of the existing materials. I shared my critiques with them and we used my comments in considering plans for a new brochure. Although I will not go into the specifics of my critique, it will suffice to say that the present materials suffered from lack of clarity, poor writing, too much emphasis on _____, graphic and production problems, and trying to serve too many purposes.

10:30 - 11:30 Following the product reviews, we developed a graphic display of the project that will be used in the brochure.

11:30 - 12:30 We worked to develop a letter and questionnaire to send to _____ directors in other states to collect documentation information regarding the number of adoptions.

1:30 - 2:00 We discussed documentation of their D/D work and I designed a simple telephone documentation log for them.

2:00 - 3:30 We worked on the project brochure. The result of this work was a determination of the brochure sections, the size and format, the production schedule, and the outline of the *cost for services* section of the brochure.

3:30 - 4:15 We discussed particular dissemination materials that they would need in creating awareness of their project and in helping other school districts to adopt the program.

4:15 - 5:00 We developed a draft of an adoption agreement between the program and adopting schools.

5:00 - 5:30 We reviewed the anticipated outcomes and discussed additional assistance. I explained that I was not certain about the availability of funds for continued assistance and suggested that they contact TISS to discuss their needs and any possible assistance.

V. *RESULTS*

All the outcomes identified on the first day were reached as well as some unanticipated outcomes. These included changing the name of the project (_____); developing a phone documentation log; drafting a letter and questionnaire for state migrant directors; and clarifying the job descriptions of_____and_____. All materials that were drafted during the visit are attached to this report.

TITLE I SUPPORT SYSTEM

Telephone Contact Report

Date: 27 April 1978

NETstaff: Susan Harris

Client: _____

PURPOSE OF CALL *Duration* 15 m *Incoming* ____ *Outgoing* x

I had not heard from _____ since we first discussed her training workshop on April 5 and April 7. I called to check her progress and see whether she needed somebody to go there and work with her.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

_____ has been unable to put as much concentrated effort into the workshop planning as she'd like primarily because she's been on the road and entertaining on-site visitors. She presented at an awareness conference in Maryland last week and then had visitors (the entire Board of Education plus assorted staff and administrators) from Orange County, South Carolina.

The Orange County group is interesting. Two parents from the district attended the Atlanta Regional Conference and were very excited about____. They went home and talked to the Board about it and now they've all come to visit the project. thinks they will probably become the second adopters.

Progress with planning for the _____ District (_____) is as follows. They returned their assessment form and and the Reading Supervisor (___ _____) discussed it at some length. Together they identified the major content areas needing attention in the workshop.:

project organization (roles & responsibilities of reading lab staff)
materials (selection and use)
methodology (H_2 use Fountain Valley

H_2 evaluate and select kids)

_____ does not currently use the Fountain Valley system but is interested in using it and planning to purchase the materials in connection with the implementation of___.

The program at _____ is currently operating with a combination of Title I, ESAA and local funds.

_____feels she has developed a good working relationship with her Contact and feels that the adoption is proceeding smoothly.

She has, just this week, begun planning the workshop and while she seemed to be in good spirits she admitted some frustration and said she had crumpled paper all over her office floor from starts she'd made and discarded.

FOLLOW-UP (who? what?) *WHEN*

_____ will call me Friday morning at which time I will review and critique her design for the workshop.

I gave her some moral support for how difficult it is to plan a workshop the first time then asked if there were specific stumbling blocks or whether she just needed to concentrate on getting something down from start to finish.

_____ felt she needed to just stick with it and thought she would shut herself up at home to do it. She has scheduled a meeting of all the project people who'll be doing the workshop for Monday to review the design and get themselves "in synch". She also has plans to discuss the overall workshop plan, needed materials, facilities, equipment, etc. with the _____ reading supervisor next week.

So, she is under the gun! We agreed that she would work on the design Thursday and call Friday morning for a review and critique.

It seemed to help her to have me to tell all this to. I'm not sure she would have followed up, even though we'd "agreed" to that, if I hadn't called.

_____ mentioned that she had had further contact with _____ (___). ____ had written _____about her training experience and gave her some "tips". More sharing and networking. Hurray!

I told_____that_____ was interested in sitting in on some other projects' training, and returning the favor, and asked if_____ et. al. would be willing to consider that.

She responded very positively. She thought it would be good to have somebody else's perspective and that she'd also welcome the chance to see how somebody else does it.

I will pass the message on to___ and see what comes up.

TITLE I SUPPORT SYSTEM

Telephone Contact Report

Date: 28 April 1978

NETstaff: Susan Harris

Client: _____

PURPOSE OF CALL

Duration 15 min. *Incoming* x *Outgoing* x
60 min.

_____ called a day early having completed her initial workshop design at home last night. She described the plan, I took notes and asked questions, then arranged to call her back a few hours later.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

_____ had gotten energized and made real progress on her design. She ran through it from start to finish while I took notes and asked questions.

I told her I'd work on it for an hour or so and then call her back and we could review it again.

I spent about an hour and a half on the review and critique. I re-read the design section of the In-service Planning Guide to refresh my memory. Then I went through her design and noted places where activities didn't seem to fit or flow or where more structure was needed.

She had good ideas and building blocks; essentially the design needed refinement. I have put copies of the initial and revised designs in the____ folder.

I also made a list of general questions and comments which we discussed. These are also documented in the folder.

This exchange was very satisfying and productive for both _____ and me. She had done a lot of hard work but was very eager for review and criticism. She responded very favorably to my major changes. In two places we discussed some alternatives and decided for hers.

_____will call back after her meetings with the staff and her discussion with the _____ people.

I asked her if she'd ever done work like this before. She hasn't except for designing training workshops for the tutors in their project. This is significantly different in that she does not know (experientially) the needs and capabilities of the group. She was grateful for the help I'd given her in deciding to do an assessment of the adopter district and to make direct contact with the Hot Springs people.

I told _____ that _____ would contact her if he decides to sit in on her training. I alerted her to his Mississippi training coming up in August.

FOLLOW-UP (who? what?) *WHEN*

TITLE I SUPPORT SYSTEM

Telephone Contact Report

Date: 19 May 1978

NETstaff: Susan Harris

Client: _____

PURPOSE OF CALL

Duration 25 min Incoming x Outgoing ___

_____had some questions about preparing her proposal.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

_____was trying to figure out how much time to project for follow up assistance as opposed to additional awareness. She also wanted to know whether one full-time dissemination coordinator and one full-time secretary were "in line."

The TA/continued awareness discussion took 5-10 minutes. After a good deal of back and forth about how much help she thought a school would need we arrived at the following:

a. She will make a round of phone calls (in early October) to her 40 adopters. Using the back-home plans and timelines prepared at the end of her training, she will check their progtess and assess needs for assistance.

b. She will describe (in the proposal) the options for providing assistance in individual cases once phone check/assessment is done. e.g. additional phone consultation, follow up training, recharge visit to project, recharge visit by project to site, send materials, etc.

c._____will budget at least 15-20 days for follow-up and probably closer to 1/3 of her time.

_____also wanted to know if we could send somebody to help her work on her proposal. She said she'd already asked but he hadn't found anybody. I told_____we couldn't ethically do that but that she sould call and discuss questions with me as she did today. This seemed to satisfy her.

She made a point of saying how much she enjoyed the MEMO and how glad she was that we were keeping the 21 Title-I projects in touch with what the others are doing.

FOLLOW-UP (who? what?) WHEN

The NETWORK

290 SOUTH MAIN STREET • ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS 01810 • (617) 470-1080

7 March 1978

Mrs. _____
Project Director
_____ Project
_____ School
_____ Road

Dear _____:

As I mentioned on the phone, _____, I had made some notes and collected some ideas in anticipation of our meeting in Kansas City in January. After talking with you yesterday, I collected the notes and ideas into the attached memo. Five areas are considered:

I. Staffing

II. Travel: time
Travel: money

III. Awareness activities in lieu of the regional conferences

IV. A Diffusion Timeline

V. Resources

I will check with you in several days to see how your planning is progressing and will let you know when I have word about the RFP.

I'd be interested to hear how the session in Washington goes on the 15th.

Sincerely,

Susan

Susan L. Harris
Project Director
Title I Support System

SLH:pjm

Att.

MEMORANDUM

TO: _____
FROM: Susan Harris
RE: Thoughts on planning for Year 2 Dissemination
DATE: 7 March 1978

I. *STAFFING*

From everything I've seen and much of what you've said,_____, your project is turning out to be very much in demand and very popular in the NDN. It seems clear that the ____(project's)_____ dissemination effort requires more than the half of your time available for it.

At the Kansas City conference, John Rowe of the New Model Me project said in a session for new D/Ds that he had found it critical to have at least one full-time dissemination person and a full-time, top-notch project secretary.

I don't know what the options are for increasing the staff on your project but here are some questions/thoughts that occur to me:

Can you be full-time next year?

Can you add a dissemination staff member so that together you total 1 FTE (full-time equivalent)?

Can you function as half-time project director and add a full-time dissemination staff member?

In this scenario you might handle project management, liaison with USOE and with the NDN, reporting, fiscal monitoring, etc. The dissemination staff person could do some of awareness presentation work, prepare project materials (brochures, manuals, etc.), work with you to arrange visits, training, etc. This person might even be a part-time trainer.

II. *TRAVEL*

Time for Travel

Make a list of all the SF and other requests for awareness presentations that you have honored this year.

Make a list of all the requests for awareness presentations that you have had to turn down.

How many states are represented?

Do you want to be able to work in the states you had to turn down?

Are there other states you want to work in from whom you've not received requests? If so, how many?

Using the answers to these questions, try to arrive at a total number of out-of-state awareness presentations you believe you may be making next year.

Following the same steps, determine the number of in-state awareness presentations you will likely make next year.

For out-of-state awareness presentations, assume one full day for travel and one full day for on-site activity. Multiply the total number of out-of-state visits by two days, add on half again as many days to account for trips that take longer, sessions that last more than one day, etc.

For example,

Assume you predict making awareness trips to 10 states. One day for travel and one day on-site for each state equals 20 days of travel for awareness. Add in 10 more days just to cover contingencies for longer trips.

You can follow the same procedure to estimate training time if you can project a reasonable number of out-of-state training events. In the case of training, however, you will want to assume more than one day on-site. So the numbers might look like this:

20 training events X 1 day travel per event X 3 days on-site per event = 80 days.

It is important to remember that it is just not possible to project *exactly* how many days you will need to budget for travel to train or do awareness since it is impossible to predict precise levels of interest or demand.

However, if you have at least one, or perhaps two full-time staff people on the dissemination effort, you can relax a little bit about having to project exact numbers of days precisely. If you know you'll have staff available at all times to do some amount of traveling, then it is a matter of doing good and careful scheduling throughout the year, as well as watching your budget.

Money for Travel

One approach to budgeting for travel is to develop a policy for what kind of travel, in what amounts, you will pay for, and what kinds of travel you will require the adopter and/or facilitator to pay for. Having done this you can always make exceptions should it seem wise to do so in particular cases, but at least you have a starting point from which to estimate your travel budget.

For example, you might set the following policy:

1. Travel and expenses related to awareness presentations will be shared equally by the SF and you.

2. Travel and expenses related to training at the adopter site must be borne in full by the adopter and/or the facilitators.

   Travel and expenses for adopters traveling to your site for visits or training must be borne by the adopter and/or the facilitator.

3. Travel and expenses for follow-up assistance will be borne by your project.

As you can see, this gives you a starting point for figuring costs. So for example, once you have estimated the amount of awareness travel you might do (1. above), you can plug in average costs for travel, expenses per trip, divide that by two and that would be your projected awareness travel budget. (Divide by two in the event that you require SFs to pay half, as in point 1 above.)

At The NETWORK, the figures we use to calculate travel costs are:

$250/average travel expense per trip -- (includes ground and air fare) plus agency per diem

So, to go back to the example of 10 awareness trips, you would calculate as follows:

10 trips @ 2½ days per trip = 25 days @ $30/day per diem, or $ 750

10 trips X $250/average travel cost per trip = 2500

Total estimated cost of 10 awareness trips for one person	$3250
Amount to be included in your budget for awareness travel	1625
Amount of awareness travel to be supported by SF/adopters	1625

III. *PLANNING FOR AWARENESS ACTIVITIES SINCE YOU WON'T HAVE THE REGIONAL CONFERENCES TO COUNT ON*

As we noted when we talked on the phone, you will need to rely on SF-sponsored awareness conferences to do face-to-face awareness building. It will be important to review the kinds of requests you had to turn down this year. Having done that, you might consider the following:

1. Get in touch with those SFs you couldn't work with and find out whether they might want to make preliminary arrangements for next fall.

2. Try to find out which, if any, of the possible awareness conferences next year would be multi-state conferences in order to demonstrate that you have an interest in reaching the widest possible audience per event. (Your proposal language may stress this as an intent whether you know it to be possible now or not.)

We also talked briefly about awareness mailings and providing materials as a strategy to include next year. Some ideas here would be:

1. Doing a mailing at the beginning of the year to all SFs providing them with any newly created materials and perhaps even another batch of this year's materials if you plan on using it again next year. A cover letter describing how your project operates -- for travel, adopter requirements, etc. -- plus a friendly sort of "Hi, it's good to be back in touch this year" is a good way to begin an awareness campaign each season.

2. You might include a plan to make selected phone calls to SFs in states you want to work in. A round of phone calls to introduce the project, find out more about the SF's operations, etc. is a viable strategy for creating awareness.

   (This would take the place of the opportunity you had to meet SFs at the regional conferences this year.)

3. Establishing a regular visitation schedule is another way of making contact with potential adopters. If you can plan now to have visitation days once each month throughout next year's dissemination activity, then you can write that into your proposal as a strategy for awareness and you can let SFs know in your first contact next year so that they can keep visitations in mind when they talk to potential adopters.

4. Other awareness mailings you might consider would be those targetted to a particular audience. For example, you may do a mailing to Title I Coordinators next year with a cover letter reminding them of your participation in the special Title I dissemination effort this year and including an awareness brochure. Whenever you do a mailing to an audience outside the NDN, be sure to mention the State Facilitator's role, the nature of the NDN and the importance of working with the SF.

5. Materials -- Part of your awareness strategy for next year may require the development of new materials. You may have found this year that some other kind of print materials would be helpful -- a new brochure, or a more in-depth program description. If so, the time and money to develop these materials, as well as the rationale for why you need them and how they will be used in your diffusion stragegy will be important things to include in your proposal.

IV. *REGARDING A DIFFUSION TIMELINE*

It might be a good idea in thinking toward next year to try to plan out the year's timeline according to phases or steps in the diffusion process. This timeline would be an ideal picture, but would provide some guidelines for determining when to shift your emphasis from making awareness presentations to concentrating on training and negotiating adoptions, etc.

For instance: Since most school budgets are finalized in December and early January (at least around here), awareness activities should be most intense in the fall in order to insure that schools can make decisions and include provisions in their budgets for the following year (if necessary) before the budget is all set.

Then training and initial implementation by adopters would likely be occurring throughout late winter and spring. Follow-up visits would probably occur near the end of school or at the beginning of the next school year.

Again, this is an idealized timeline. We know awareness activities are continuous and ongoing; schools often cannot make decisions in time to modify school budgets; and the late spring is not the best time to begin implementing a new program because summer causes a break at a critical time.

However, for purposes of your proposal, if you describe your year's activities according to a sequential diffusion strategy carried on over the calendar year, then you have a starting point from which to deviate in individual cases, as well as a basis for making decisions about program activity.

V. *RESOURCES*

1. Your documentation of this year's activity (everything from how many presentations you made to how many brochures you sent out) will be a good indicator of what your next year's activity might be.

2. An analysis of your budget should tell you whether last year's estimates for materials, telephone, consultants, etc. were adequate or in need of modification for next year.

3. Three resources you've received from The NETWORK might be helpful as you plan for next year:

   -- *Diffusion Planning Packet* (distributed at the New Orleans meeting)

   -- *Educational Manager's Guide to Project Planning* (distributed at Denver conference)

   -- *Diffusion Management Timeline* (distributed at New Orleans)

SLH:pjm

APPENDIX C: *Questionnaire used in Telephone Interviews of 21 Projects Served by the Title I Support System*

TISS QUESTIONNAIRE

Project_____

Respondent_____

Date_____Time_____

This questionnaire is for a telephone survey among the 21 demonstration programs that were specially selected to diffuse programs nationally among Title I schools. Our questions have to do with the impact of services they have received from The NETWORK, their own experience in disseminating programs this year and some background information about their projects. At the end, I will ask respondents to discuss some particular assistance they have received from us and how useful it has been.

SECTION I

1. What type of services come to mind when you think of The NETWORK (i.e., the technical assistance provided by Susan Harris and her staff).

2. We are interested in finding out what services you have received from The NETWORK and how you feel about them. I will read a list of services and ask you to respond to them in a fairly systematic manner. If at any time the question is unclear or does not apply to your particular situation stop me so that we can clarify it. Otherwise I will read through the list. First, yes or no

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Question: Has The NETWORK ever given you any assistance....?

	YES	NO	(If yes) Was the assistance...? How was it useful? Very Useful	Useful	Not at All Useful
-in understanding your instructional program	___	___	___	___	___
-in developing awareness type brochures or visuals	___	___	___	___	___
-in organizing and conducting awareness presentations	___	___	___	___	___
-in planning strategies to follow-up on potential adopters	___	___	___	___	___

	YES	NO	(If yes) Was the assistance....? How was it useful?		
			Very Useful	Useful	Not at All Useful
-in assessing the needs of a potential adopter	___	___	___	___	___
-in determining the criteria for an adoption	___	___	___	___	___
-in providing training for adopting districts	___	___	___	___	___
-in contacting state facilitators and coordinating your activities with them	___	___	___	___	___

	(If yes) Was the assistance....?					
	YES	NO	How was it useful?			
			Very Useful	Useful	Not at All Useful	
-in dealing with state Title I coordinators	___	___	___	___	___	
-in understanding the nature of educational program diffusion	___	___	___	___	___	
-in learning how to identify your needs in a national dissemination effort	___	___	___	___	___	
-in planning an overall timeline for dissemination activities	___	___	___	___	___	

	(If yes) Was the assistance....?					
	YES	NO	How was it useful?			
			Very Useful	Useful	Not at All Useful	
-in including your staff or team in program diffusion	___	___	___	___	___	
-in understanding the guidelines laid down by USOE for program diffusion	___	___	___	___	___	
-in developing means to document the diffusion activities of your project	___	___	___	___	___	
-by informing you about regional conference dates and locations and providing you with general logistical information	___	___	___	___	___	

	YES	NO	(If Yes) Was the assistance....? How was it useful? Very Useful	Useful	Not at All Useful
-by directing you to the resources and services of consultants other than The NETWORK staff	___	___	___	___	___
-by providing you with articles or information about your work in dissemination	___	___	___	___	___
-in sharing your experiences with other demonstration projects	___	___	___	___	___
-in securing approval and support for dissemination from your local school district	___	___	___	___	___

(If Yes) Was the assistance....?

	YES	NO	How was it useful?		
			Very Useful	Useful	Not at All Useful
-by offering human support and encouragement in your efforts	___	___	___	___	___
-in utilizing your PIP in diffusion activities	___	___	___	___	___

SECTION II

1. I now want to ask you a series of questions concerning your experience this year in nationwide diffusion; specifically what changes have occurred in your ability to diffuse programs and how outside technical assistance has influenced these changes. Like the last question if you have any difficulties answering a question, or it does not apply, just say so. The question reads: Compared to last September, how would you assess your ability to....? The answers are: Much more able to/A bit more able to/Just as able to/ Less able to. (Suggest: If it would be easier for you, you might want to write the question and possible answers down).

Question: Compared to last September, how would you assess your ability to....?

	Much More Able To	A bit More Able To	Just as Able To	Less Able To	Has outside assistance influenced this change?
-understand your instructional program	___	___	___	___	
-develop awareness materials about your program	___	___	___	___	
-present it in an interesting manner	___	___	___	___	
-to do follow-up on potential adopters	___	___	___	___	

Question: Compared to last September, how would you assess your ability to....? (Cont.)

	Much More Able To	More Able To	Just as Able To	Less Able To	Has outside assistance influenced this change?
-assess the needs of a potential adopter	____	____	____	____	
-determine the criteria for an adoption	____	____	____	____	
-secure program adoptions	____	____	____	____	
-provide training for adopting districts	____	____	____	____	

Question: Compared to last September, how would you assess your ability to....? (Cont.)

	Much More Able To	More Able To	Just as Able To	Less Able To	Has outside assistance influenced this change?
-provide additional assistance during the implementation of an adoption	____	____	____	____	
-make contact with SFs and coordinate dissemination with them	____	____	____	____	
-deal with state Title I Coordinators	____	____	____	____	
-understand the nature of educational program diffusion	____	____	____	____	

Question: Compared to last September, how would you assess your ability to....? (Cont.)

	Much More Able To	A bit More Able To	Just as Able To	Less Able To	Has outside assistance influenced this change?
-identify your own needs for a national diffusion effort	____	____	____	____	
-plan an overall timeline for dissemination	____	____	____	____	
-involve your staff in program diffusion	____	____	____	____	
-document the diffusion activities of your project	____	____	____	____	
-acquire resources and services that improve your work in program diffusion	____	____	____	____	

Question: Compared to last September, how would you assess your ability to....? (Cont.)

	Much More Able To	A bit More Able To	Just as Able To	Less Able To	Has outside assistance influenced this change?
-share experiences with other demonstration projects	____	____	____	____	
-secure approval and support for dissemination efforts from your local school district	____	____	____	____	
-utilize your PIP in diffusion activities	____	____	____	____	

2. What is the most significant outside TA you received this year?

SECTION III

Background Variables

1. Can you tell me about its history in program dissemination?

2. Is your program currently being disseminated in any other diffusion network, such as an instate diffusion program?

3. Do you work full-time disseminating your program. (If no, ask) What are your other responsibilities.

SECTION III Background Variables (cont.)

4. Have you done any out-of-state training sessions?

5. When did you personally become involved in disseminating your program?

6. What induced your district to participate in national diffusion? Does the district support your efforts in program diffusion? How is it shown?

7. What is your budget for diffusion? Do you receive any other support for diffusion besides the NDN grant?

SECTION IV

As a final question, I want to talk to you about a particular product or assistance you received from The NETWORK and how useful it has been for you?